Government of Saskatchewan

Annual Report 1999-2000

Saskatchewan Environment and Resource Management

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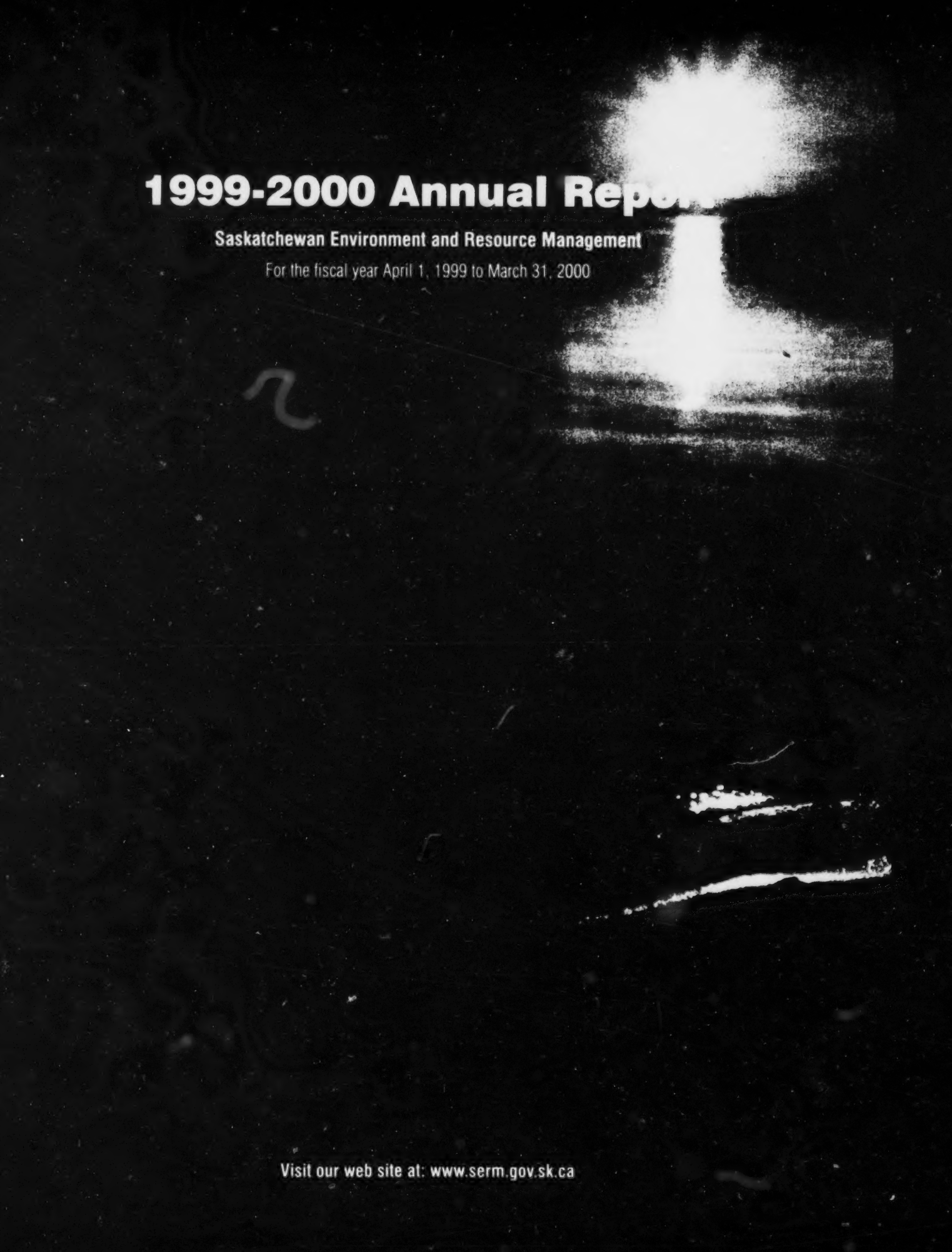

1999-2000 Annual Repo

Saskatchewan Environment and Resource Management

For the fiscal year April 1, 1999 to March 31, 2000

Visit our web site at: www.serm.gov.sk.ca

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Letters of Transmittal

The Honourable Linda Haverstock
Lieutenant Governor
Province of Saskatchewan

Your Honour:

As Minister responsible for the Department of Environment and Resource Management, it is my pleasure to submit our Annual Report for the year ended March 31, 2000.

Respectfully submitted,

Buckley Belanger
Minister

The Honourable Buckley Belanger
Minister of Environment and Resource Management

Dear Sir:

I respectfully submit to you the Annual Report for the Department of Environment and Resource Management (SERM) for the year ending March 31, 2000.

The 1999-2000 Annual Report details the department's goals, objectives and accomplishments toward achieving our vision - a high quality environment and healthy ecosystems that support the health, economic and social well-being of the people of Saskatchewan. It provides information on how the department ensured the quality of our air, water and landscapes remains high. It explains how SERM promoted wise use of the natural resources that provide the province significant employment and economic benefits. And it speaks of future activities that will further Saskatchewan's appeal as a desirable place to live, work, visit and invest.

SERM welcomes this opportunity to review the department's recent accomplishments and looks forward to continued success.

Respectfully submitted,

Stuart Kramer
Deputy Minister

Department Overview

Mandate

Environment and Resource Management's mandate is to manage, enhance and protect Saskatchewan's natural and environmental resources -fish, wildlife, lands, forests, parks and protected areas, air, water and soil - for conservation, recreation, social, and economic purposes and to ensure they are sustained for future generations.

Specifically the department's mandate is:

- Protection of primary resources, including air, water and soil, using regulatory and non-regulatory controls;
- Ecosystem management and protection of natural resources, including forests, fish, wildlife, lands, parks and their natural and cultural resources, in such a way as to ensure their sustainability and biological diversity;
- Assessment, regulation, minimization, and mitigation of the impact of alterations to the natural environment by development activities through implementation of the environmental impact assessment program;
- Maximization of economic and social benefits from renewable resources and programs while maintaining resource sustainability;
- Promotion of public, stakeholder and Aboriginal peoples' involvement in environmental and resource management;
- Encourage stewardship of the environment and its natural, recreational and cultural resources;
- Cooperation in the development of interjurisdictional, national and global initiatives aimed at enhancing environmental and resource conservation and management.

SERM's sphere of activity encompasses:

- 37.7 million hectares of Crown land, or 58 percent of total provincial land base;
- more than 35 million hectares of forest land;
- 520 species of animals (416 bird, 85 mammal, seven amphibian, and 12 reptile), 84 species of fish in more than 50,000 waterbodies and 159 species of insects; and
- 34 provincial parks, 137 recreation sites, 23 protected areas, seven ecological reserves, eight historic sites.

Vision and Guiding Principles

SERM's Vision is:

A high quality environment and healthy ecosystems in perpetuity which sustain social, health and economic well-being for Saskatchewan citizens.

SERM's Guiding Principles

Public Involvement

SERM uses a range of methods to involve stakeholders and the public in its activities. These methods include education, information, consultation, partnerships, co-management and self determination. Public involvement represents a way of doing business for SERM; a long-range goal is to have staff fully equipped to recognize the need for public involvement and able to utilize appropriate methods for specific circumstances. Consensus decision-making and co-operative processes are our preferred approaches.

Integration

The department places a high value on integration in both its structure and its processes. This reflects the need to consider all resources, values and stakeholders, and their interrelationships, in planning and decision-making. While we continue to make structural changes to the organization, we will improve the processes through which we work. Planning, policy and program development and operational activities will be carried out to the greatest degree possible in an integrated manner.

Ecosystem Approach

The department is committed to using an ecosystem approach to the sustainable management of the province's primary (environmental) and renewable (natural) resources. The ecosystem approach requires that we view the basic components (air, water, land and organisms, including humans) and functions of ecosystems in a broad context, integrating environmental, social and economic concerns. This approach to planning and management means the department has shifted from traditional sectoral approaches to one that emphasises integration. The ecosystem approach focuses on the integrated management of ecological systems and human activities to maintain or enhance the health and integrity of an ecosystem.

Sustainability

Sustainability is fundamental to renewable resource management. Sustainability means the productive capacity of Saskatchewan's renewable resource base is maintained while the surplus is harvested to provide social and economic benefits to the people of Saskatchewan. Improving our ability to manage on a ecosystem basis is key to ensuring sustainability.

Empowerment

The department consciously and actively provides individuals with the authority and the necessary tools to take action. Within the department we strive to ensure that, wherever possible, decisions are made at the operating levels. Prescriptive policy and procedure manuals are replaced by policy frameworks and guidelines that communicate "why" and "what" to encourage individual judgement in making decisions that reflect specific circumstances. Policy is centralized; implementation is decentralized. Outside of the department we emphasize results rather than process. We set standards, and specify principles such as equity, consistency and inclusive processes, while encouraging stakeholders to participate in and take ownership of specific decisions that impact them.

Harmonization

SERM is one of many jurisdictions in a complex and evolving network of provincial, regional, national and international relationships. For situations that necessitate regulatory or administrative measures, the measures are as compatible as possible with those of linked jurisdictions. We strive to achieve our environmental and resource management goals in a manner that minimizes jurisdictional overlap, duplication and conflict.

Equity

The department places a high value on equity as it applies to both internal and external interactions. SERM believes equity fosters an environment characterized by respect for others, honesty, fairness and equality. SERM employees are committed to trusting, open interactions and they support the goals of employment equity.

Root Causes

SERM seeks to solve problems by addressing the root causes, rather than treating symptoms. In some cases this requires information, education or clarification of values. In other cases it requires a common sense approach that emphasizes effectiveness and efficiency (e.g., pollution prevention is preferable to waste disposal).

Operations Division is the program delivery or "operations" arm of the department. Operations Division provides regional planning and delivery of the department's programs and services. A main vehicle of delivery is a network of EcoRegion and Area Management offices which offer front-line assistance and management. Within Operations Division there are three branches: Fire Management and Forest Protection; Enforcement and Compliance; and Regional Services. Regional Services provides policy and regulatory support to five EcoRegions (i.e. Grassland, Parkland, East Boreal, West Boreal and the Shield).

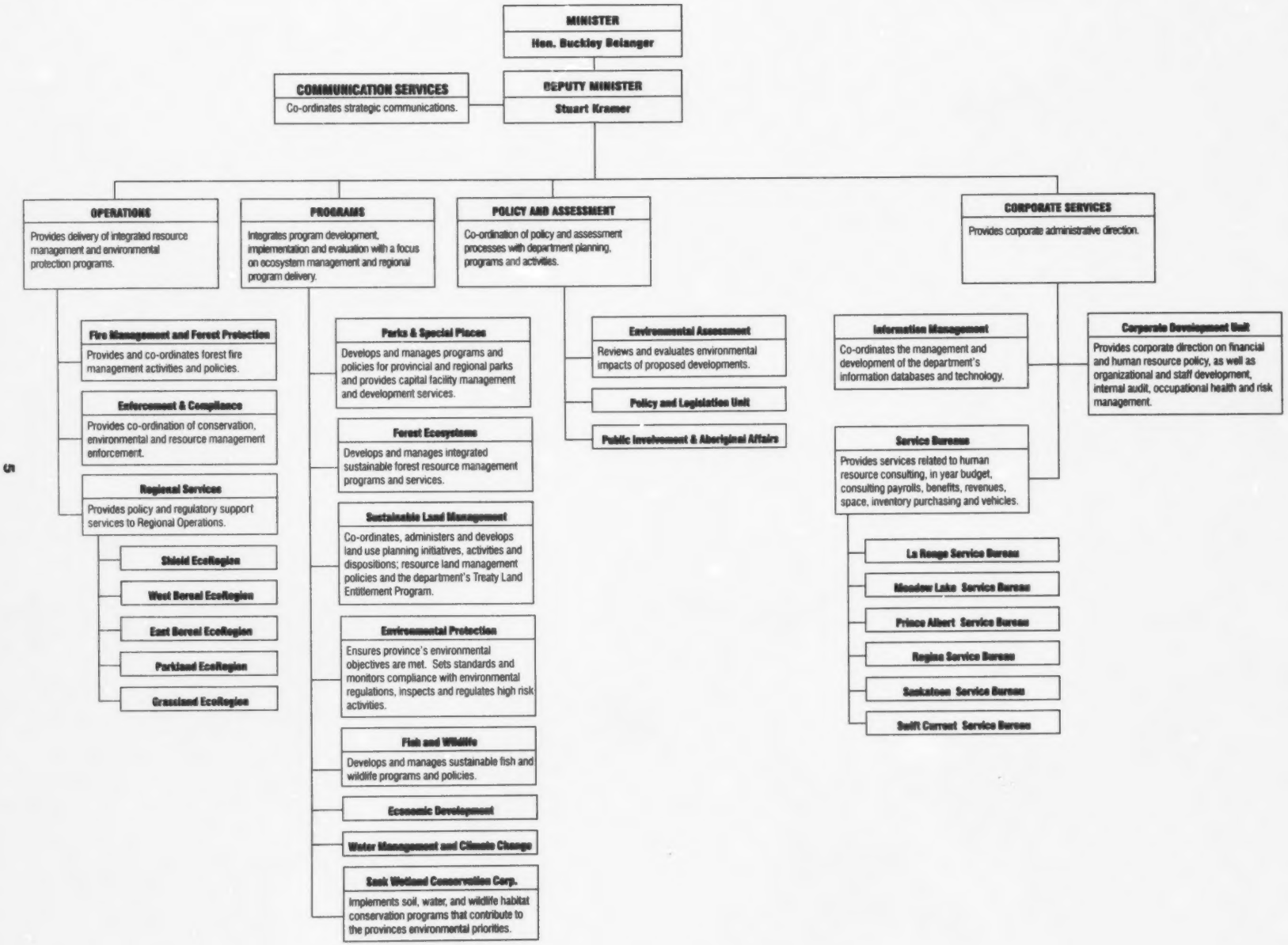
Programs Division develops and coordinates the planning, development, implementation and evaluation of environmental and resource management policies, programs and legislation. The division includes the following branches/units: Parks and Special Places; Forest Ecosystems; Sustainable Land Management; Environmental Protection; Fish and Wildlife; Economic Development; and Water Management and Climate Change.

Policy and Assessment Division groups several key functions relating to the integration and coordination of policies and activities across the department. These functions include: coordination of strategic planning, policy and legislative processes, policies and processes regarding public involvement and Aboriginal liaison, environmental impact assessment and ecosystem-based management planning. Policy and Assessment Division includes: Policy and Legislation; Public Involvement and Aboriginal Affairs; and Environmental Assessment.

Corporate Services Division provides a broad range of support to the entire department with respect to human resource, financial, property and information technology management and organizational development. This includes the provision and operation of a wide range of financial, personnel and administrative systems and processes, as well as policy development, long term planning and central agency liaison in all of these areas. The Division's services are provided through a staff complement situated in six Service Bureaus throughout the province as well as a Corporate Development Unit and an Information Management Branch.

Communication Services coordinates strategic communications to position the department, to increase environmental stewardship and participation in department programs, to facilitate information exchange within the department, and to facilitate public and stakeholder input in the development of policies and programs. Communication Services is comprised of: Public and Media Services, Production Services and the Inquiry Centre.

SERM Organization Chart


MINISTER
Hon. Buckley Belanger
COMMUNICATION SERVICES
Co-ordinates strategic communications.
DEPUTY MINISTER
Stuart Kramer
OPERATIONS
Provides delivery of integrated resource management and environmental protection programs.
PROGRAMS
Integrates program development, implementation and evaluation with a focus on ecosystem management and regional program delivery.
POLICY AND ASSESSMENT
Co-ordination of policy and assessment processes with department planning, programs and activities.
CORPORATE SERVICES
Provides corporate administrative direction.
Fire Management and Forest Protection
Provides and co-ordinates forest fire management activities and policies.
Enforcement & Compliance
Provides co-ordination of conservation, environmental and resource management enforcement.
Regional Services
Provides policy and regulatory support services to Regional Operations.
Shield EcoRegion
West Boreal EcoRegion
East Boreal EcoRegion
Parkland EcoRegion
Grassland EcoRegion
Parks & Special Places
Develops and manages programs and policies for provincial and regional parks and provides capital facility management and development services.
Forest Ecosystems
Develops and manages integrated sustainable forest resource management programs and services.
Sustainable Land Management
Co-ordinates, administers and develops land use planning initiatives, activities and dispositions; resource land management policies and the department's Treaty Land Entitlement Program.
Environmental Protection
Ensures province's environmental objectives are met. Sets standards and monitors compliance with environmental regulations, inspects and regulates high risk activities.
Fish and Wildlife
Develops and manages sustainable fish and wildlife programs and policies.
Economic Development
Water Management and Climate Change
Sask Wetland Conservation Corp.
Implements soil, water, and wildlife habitat conservation programs that contribute to the provinces environmental priorities.
Environmental Assessment
Reviews and evaluates environmental impacts of proposed developments.
Policy and Legislation Unit
Public Involvement & Aboriginal Affairs
Information Management
Co-ordinates the management and development of the department's information databases and technology.
Service Bureaus
Provides services related to human resource consulting, in year budget, consulting payrolls, benefits, revenues, space, inventory purchasing and vehicles.
La Ronge Service Bureau
Meadow Lake Service Bureau
Prince Albert Service Bureau
Regina Service Bureau
Saskatoon Service Bureau
Swift Current Service Bureau
Corporate Development Unit
Provides corporate direction on financial and human resource policy, as well as organizational and staff development, internal audit, occupational health and risk management.

Legislation Administered

The Clean Air Act
Protects Saskatchewan's air quality by regulating emissions which originate in the province.

The Conservation Easements Act
This legislation encourages private landowners, conservation organizations and governments to protect ecologically sensitive lands and natural areas through voluntary agreements.

The Ecological Reserves Act
Protects unique, natural ecosystems and landscape features through the designation of Crown land as ecological reserves.

The Environmental Assessment Act
Provides a mechanism for requiring and undertaking impact assessment and evaluation. Ministerial approval is required before a proponent may proceed with a development, and terms and conditions may be imposed on the approval to mitigate impacts.

The Environmental Management and Protection Act
Protects the air, land and water resources of the province through regulating and controlling potentially harmful activities and substances.

The Fisheries Act (Saskatchewan), 1994
Enables sustainable management of fisheries resources by affirming provincial ownership of fish, creating a provincial licensing system, and regulating allocation of fish resources, fish marketing, aquaculture, sport fishing and commercial fishing.

The Forest Resources Management Act
Allows the department to implement a new framework for Sustainably managing Saskatchewan's forest resources.

The Grasslands National Park Act
Ratifies and validates the Grasslands National Park Agreement and allows the province to transfer land to the federal government for inclusion in the Grasslands National Park.

The Litter Control Act
Makes littering an offence and provides for the establishment and administration of a deposit refund system for various beverage containers.

The Natural Resources Act
Establishes the province's mandate to manage, protect, conserve and develop renewable resources in a sustainable manner.

The Ozone-Depleting Substances Control Act, 1993
Protects the upper atmospheric ozone layer by banning the use and manufacture of ozone-depleting substances.

The Parks Act, 1997
Provides authority for the management, administration and disposition of park land and park land reserves.

The Prairie and Forest Fires Act, 1982
Provides for the prevention, detection and suppression of prairie and forest fires originating in provincial forests, parks and on unoccupied Crown lands. It also governs compensation for conscripted fire fighters and authorizes establishment and regulation of fire bans and burning permit areas.

The Provincial Lands Act
Creates authority for the management and transfer of Crown lands.

The Regional Parks Act, 1979
Allows the Minister to assist local governments and agencies in establishing regional parks and agencies to increase availability of parks to the public.

The Sale or Lease of Certain Lands Act
Gives Cabinet the ability to place conditions on the transfer or lease of lands listed in a schedule to this Act.

The State of the Environment Report Act
Provides for public accountability in reporting of environmental conditions and activities through the preparation and release of a State of the Environment Report every two years.

The Water Appeal Board Act
Establishes the Water Appeal Board and enables the board to hear appeals regarding water, sewage and drainage issues.

The Wildlife Act, 1998
Provides for the management, conservation and protection of wildlife resources through the issuance and revocation of licences, the prosecution of wildlife offenses and the establishment of annual hunting seasons.

The Wildlife Habitat Protection Act
Provides for the management, conservation and protection of wildlife lands and wildlife by preventing the sale and alteration of certain Crown lands.

Primary Partners and Stakeholders

Saskatchewan Environment and Resource Management has hundreds of partners and stakeholders at the local, regional and provincial levels. Those listed to the right are organizations that are provincial in scope, have a significant impact on the environment and natural resources, are involved in major current issues, and/or maintain a long-term relationship with the department.

- Association of Consulting Engineers of Saskatchewan
- Association of Saskatchewan Urban Park and Conservation Agencies
- Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers
- Cameco
- Canadian Bankers' Association
- Canadian Federation of Independent Business
- Canadian Forest Service
- Canadian Heritage River System Board
- Canadian Interagency Forest Fire Centre
- Canadian Petroleum Products Institute
- Canadian Plains Research Centre
- Canadian Wildlife Service
- Cigar Lake Mining
- Cogema Resources Inc.
- Council of Saskatchewan Forest Industries Inc.
- Consumer's Co-operative/New Grade Upgrader
- Ducks Unlimited Canada
- Ecotourism Society
- Environment Canada
- Farm Woodlot Association of Saskatchewan
- Federal/Provincial Park Council
- Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations
- Husky Oil
- IPSCO
- Interprovincial Pipeline
- IMC - Kalium
- L & M Wood Products Limited
- Meadow Lake Tribal Council
- Métis Nation of Saskatchewan
- Millar Western Industries Ltd.
- Mistik Management Ltd.
- Museums Association of Saskatchewan (MAS)
- Nature Saskatchewan
- NorSask Forest Products Ltd.
- Parks Canada
- Prince Albert Grand Council
- Provincial Association of Resort Communities of Saskatchewan (PARCS)
- Saskatchewan Action Foundation for the Environment
- Saskatchewan Archaeological Society
- Saskatchewan Association of Automotive Repairers
- Saskatchewan Association of Firearm Education (SAFE)
- Saskatchewan Association of Rehabilitation Centres (SARC)
- Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities (SARM)
- Saskatchewan Commercial Fishermen's Cooperative Federation Ltd.
- Saskatchewan Dutch Elm Disease Association
- Saskatchewan Eco-Network
- Saskatchewan Energy Corporation
- Saskatchewan Environment and Industry Managers Association
- Saskatchewan Environmental Society
- Saskatchewan Forestry Association
- Saskatchewan Government Employees Union
- Saskatchewan Independent Forest Industries
- Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology
- Saskatchewan Mining Association
- Saskatchewan Outfitters Association
- Saskatchewan Parks and Recreation Association (SPRA)
- Saskatchewan Potash Producers' Association
- Saskatchewan Provincial Parks Cottage Owners Association
- Saskatchewan Power Corporation
- Saskatchewan Regional Parks Association (SRPA)
- Saskatchewan Research Council
- Saskatchewan Ski Association
- Saskatchewan Snowmobile Association
- Saskatchewan Stock Growers Association
- Saskatchewan Trappers Association
- Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association (SUMA)
- Saskatchewan Waste Reduction Council
- Saskatchewan Water and Wastewater Association
- Saskatchewan Water Corporation
- Saskatchewan Wetland Conservation Corporation
- Saskatchewan Wheat Pool
- Saskatchewan Wild Rice Council
- Saskatchewan Wildlife Federation
- Saskatoon Chemicals
- SaskFerco Products Inc.
- Saskfor MacMillan Ltd. Partnership
- SaskTip, Inc.
- TransCanada Trail Council
- TREEmendous Saskatchewan
- Tourism Saskatchewan
- University of Regina
- University of Saskatchewan
- Weyerhaeuser Canada Ltd., Saskatchewan Division
- World Wildlife Fund

The Year in Review 1999-2000

This annual report is offered to Government, our stakeholders, staff, clients and the public to provide information about our activities in 1999-2000 that contribute to our goals and objectives.

As in previous years, this Annual Report provides information on priority activities identified in strategic planning documents, including SERM's 1999-2000 Corporate Plan and SERM's Five-Year Plan (1997).

In 1999-2000, SERM's Strategic Goals were:

Goal I **Corporate Affairs** - ongoing evaluation of the department's organizational structure and design; strengthen Aboriginal issues management; promote public involvement and economic development; and manage federal-provincial affairs.

Goal II **Ecosystem Management** - Expand our knowledge and understanding of ecosystems and ecosystem components, enhance the protection of biodiversity and ecological processes and adjust current resource harvesting and land use practices to maintain ecological integrity.

Goal III **Policies, Legislation and Programs** - Strengthen program management capabilities by deleting outdated and developing new or upgraded policies, legislation, programs, strategies and action plans.

Goal IV **Organizational Development** - Build a strong, well-informed, confident workforce and provide a safe and positive working environment for all employees.

Goal V **Business Management and Program Support** - Improve decision-making by refining information and financial management processes, in-reach and out-reach programs, communications and public participation/partnerships.

The 1999-2000 Annual Report describes SERM's **objectives** - measurable outcomes that move us toward our goals - as well as our **actions,** detailed information on how SERM staff encourage environmental protection and sustainable resource management in Saskatchewan.

The December 6, 1999 Speech from the Throne stated "Citizens have the right to know more of what their government is trying to accomplish...Government departments will clearly spell out their goals and achievements...They will be accountable for their performance and their achievements will be measured against key benchmarks." This directive launched a government-wide effort to develop and implement a new approach to government accountability. SERM volunteered to be one of the organizations to pilot this new approach and is well along the first phase of the project - **planning** and **performance management** (setting benchmarks, measuring progress towards the planned goals, evaluating programs and outcomes, and developing risk assessment and management strategies). Next year's 2000-01 Annual Report will be the first to detail performance measures, performance indicators, and risk assessments based on a new framework of goals and objectives. See Future Steps, page 41, for more information.

Goal 1 Corporate Affairs

Ongoing evaluation of the department's organizational structure and design; strengthen Aboriginal issues management; promote public involvement and economic development; and manage federal-provincial affairs.

Objectives

A. Evaluate SERM's Organizational Redesign

1. Review the department's policy capacity;
2. Review SERM's senior committee functions and operations; implement recommendations;
3. Review the Integrated Resource Management stream and implement recommendations;
4. Continue to integrate environmental programs and training into conservation officer (CO) work plans to achieve the target of 25 per cent of CO's work to be devoted to environmental issues; and
5. Optimize departmental efficiency, effectiveness and client services through further development of the Service Bureau operations model.

B. Aboriginal Affairs

The treaty land entitlement (TLE) process enables First Nations to purchase lands to further economic and social goals. In 1999-2000, 176 requests for new selections and re-selections were processed. Three of 28 bands achieved their shortfall acreages and created reserves. An additional 12 bands have acquired all their shortfall acreages, and expectations are that all will move to reserve status by the end of 2000.

1. Implement a capacity-building program whereby full-time Métis Nation of Saskatchewan (MNS) and Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations (FSIN) staff are devoted to delivering jointly-developed work plans;
2. Increase SERM staff's knowledge, skills and resources in the area of Aboriginal affairs, including Aboriginal Affairs Policy Framework, Aboriginal Consultation Guidelines, legal context, branch and regional Aboriginal program strategic planning;
3. Coordinate provincial responses to Aboriginal legal issues court challenges and SERM's Aboriginal program and strategic responses;
4. Cooperation with the FSIN to develop guidelines for traditional hunting cabins as per the Sundown decision;
5. Continue the development of a strong Community Justice Program by ensuring aboriginal youth are a major component of the department's compliance initiatives.

Regional Initiatives:

- Maintain partnerships with Aboriginal groups;
- Complete a Traditional Resource Use policy for Lac La Ronge Provincial Park;
- Work closely with individual First Nations to develop a common understanding of SERM's involvement in enforcing First Nation Bylaws on outfitting on Indian Reserves;
- Develop a pilot "relationship building" program with a First Nations school to discuss resource management, Treaty rights, etc.;
- Continue negotiations with Beardy's Okemasis and One Arrow First Nation regarding potential partnerships at Fort Carlton;
- Continue to expand the partnership agreement with Montreal Lake Cree Nation to include a monitoring study of the spawning run in the Waskesiu River and initiate the field study for the Elk Research project;
- Complete the Fort-a-la-Corne access management proposal with James Smith Cree Nation; and
- Negotiate with the Nekaneet First Nation and the FSIN to reconcile conflicts between First Nations' hunting and recreational use of the West Block of Cypress Hills Interprovincial Park. Develop and institute a new park interpretive project to inform park visitors of First Nations' history and rights in the Cypress Hills.

SERM's Clean Cat visited nine elementary schools, relaying the importance of the 4 Rs (reduce, re-use, recycle and recover) to some 1,690 children and 67 teachers in 1999-2000.

C. Public Involvement/Partnerships Agenda

1. Increase northern involvement in the Cumulative Effects Monitoring program;
2. Maintain existing and develop new partnerships, memoranda of understanding and other agreements to foster regulatory compliance and to achieve broad environmental protection goals;
3. Expand partnerships and community involvement to raise public awareness, understanding and promotion of Fire Management and Forest Protection (FMFP) Branch programs;
4. Partner with corporate interests to protect and manage sensitive species and ecological systems impacted by resource development activities;
5. Involve stakeholders to identify and plan subdivisions in the Shield EcoRegion;
6. Expand partnerships and work with industry in the areas of fire proofing and harvest planning; and
7. Pursue developing a Northern Parks Advisory Committee.

D. Economic Development Agenda

1. Liaise with existing forest industry, First Nations, Métis, and potential economic expansion partners to restructure and expand the forest industry in Saskatchewan;
2. Develop the environmental industry sector in Saskatchewan;
3. Assess the viability and potential of the commercial fishery, develop action plans to improve fishermen's economic returns, and improve working relations between the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation (FFMC) and fish harvesters;
4. Evaluate the potential of expanding the aquaculture industry in Saskatchewan;
5. Explore the potential of developing surplus fish stocks for international trade purposes;
6. Explore the feasibility and potential marketing of the following programs in Asian-Pacific Rim nations:
   - Recycling (SARCAN Model)
   - Forest protection and fire management
   - Oil and toxic chemicals spill prevention and waste management
   - Water management
7. Increase the profile of economic activity dependent on department programs; and
8. Establish an internal Economic Development Forum to provide economic information and analysis to the department.

The provincial Fish Culture Station at Fort Qu'Appelle provide tours and information for 5,000-7,000 visitors a year.

E. Federal/Provincial Affairs

1. Continue to provide leadership and coordination to Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment (CCME) initiatives, including work in the signed sub-agreements and the new sub-agreement on environmental emergencies;
2. Complete the Solid Waste 2000 review and implement associated measurement work;
3. Complete the Bilateral Agreement on Environmental Assessment Co-operation harmonization agreement with the federal government and Manitoba; begin similar discussions with Alberta;
4. Undertake program/regulatory revisions in accordance with the National Action Plan on Ozone-depleting Substances;
5. Develop a federal-provincial cost sharing agreement and implement clean up of Gunnar and Lorado uranium mine sites; develop a strategy to address overlap and duplication in the uranium mining industry;
6. Continue Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) requirements and follow-up for uranium mines in Saskatchewan;
7. Implement the Accord for the Protection of Species at Risk in Canada;

8. Assist in the coordination and integration of federal and provincial activities in the area of sustainable water management in Saskatchewan;
9. Initiate monitoring plans for implementing the Canada-Wide Strategy for Acid Rain for Post 2000 in Saskatchewan;
10. Continue participation on the National Task Force on Recreational Fishing and implement recommendations appropriate for Saskatchewan;
11. Negotiate with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) on fish habitat management delegation and Fisheries Act streamlining;
12. Implement the Federal-Provincial Freshwater Science Agreement;
13. Along with Manitoba and Canada to assess water resources and the impact of current and future development activity (per the Upper Assiniboine River Basin Study); and
14. Finalize border agreements related to fire management with Alberta, Manitoba, Northwest Territory (NWT) and Parks Canada.

Activities and Accomplishments

A. Evaluate SERM's Organizational Redesign

A review of the department's policy capacity was completed; SERM's senior committee functions and operations were reviewed and recommendations implemented.

The roles and responsibilities of Operations Division's Integrated Resource Management (IRM) staff were reviewed. (IRM staff deliver services related to fish and wildlife, parks, forestry, lands and outfitting and play a major role in integrated program delivery in each EcoRegion). *A Review of the Integrated Resource Management Component of SERM's Operations Division* (1999) led to a better understanding of the EcoRegions IRM mandate and identified where there was a need for new/revised working relationships and business practices. Recommendations focused on greater program integration and enabling IRM staff to do their jobs more effectively.

Parkland EcoRegion achieved the 1999-2000 target of 25 per cent of a CO's work to be devoted to environmental issues. SERM offered municipal environmental training sessions and COs became more familiar with that aspect of their responsibilities. COs in the EcoRegions gained familiarity with water treatment plants, sewage lagoons and landfills as part of their expanded responsibilities for water, waste water and landfill issues. COs also received training in support of SERM's Hazardous Substances and Waste Dangerous Goods Program.

After a joint review of the Service Bureau operations model:

- Full financial accountability was established as a Service Bureau responsibility;
- Customer Service Representatives outside of Service Bureau or regional office settings now report through Operations Division; and
- Revenue handling processes were streamlined with accountability for accuracy and timeliness decentralized from the Regina Service Bureau to the other Bureaus.

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The Service Bureau model is still a relatively new model and processes are examined on an on-going basis to ensure duplication and non-value added functions are eliminated and effective client service is enhanced. A tool to measure performance is to be developed. In the interim, Service Bureaus consult with internal and external clients on a regular basis to optimize service delivery. A Service Bureau Training Conference held in the spring of 1999 improved communication and interaction between central and field staff.

B. Aboriginal Affairs

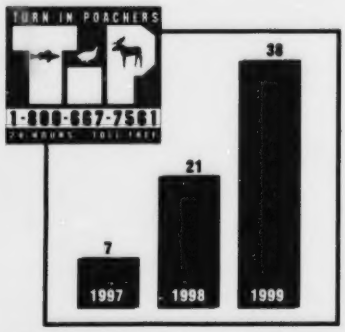
The SERM/MNS Renewable Resource and Environmental Management Partnership Agreement was renewed. A Bilateral Task Force was formed to:

- meet community needs;
- focus on practical community-based action;
- enhance resource management; and
- provide a forum to integrate requirements of Aboriginal rights.

With assistance from SERM, MNS was able to hire a Lands and Resources Coordinator to work with department staff on issues of mutual concern. SERM and FSIN also formed a bilateral task force and signed a services agreement to enhance cooperation in environmental and renewable resource management. FSIN used contributions from Indian and Northern Affairs Canada and SERM to hire policy analysts and field personnel to work with department staff

SERM, FSIN and bands cooperate on an ongoing basis to resolve issues arising from Aboriginal legal issues/court challenges, e.g., developing guidelines, principles and processes regarding traditional hunting cabins constructed in provincial parks and Crown lands (per the Sundown decision of the Supreme Court).

In 1999-2000 SERM offered six workshops to department staff on Aboriginal Cultural Awareness and Policy Transfer. Another four workshops were scheduled for 2000-01. SERM is also working with Saskatchewan Federated Indian College (SIFC) to encourage more Aboriginal people to enroll in environmental management and protection classes offered through SIFC's Science program.



Number of cases handled through alternative measures.

The department worked closely with FSIN and Saskatchewan Justice to further an alternative measure approach to resolving resource offences. Modified procedures helped to increase the number of cases involving First Nation people handled through alternative measures. Awareness and understanding of the Community Justice program by COs was enhanced through workshops held in northern communities.

The 1999-2000 fiscal was the final year of five-year contracts between FMFP Branch and First Nations. New five-year contracts were negotiated with the following program enhancements:

- training increased to bring crews to national standards, increasing skill development and allowing crews to be exportable to other provinces;
- a return hiring provision for First Nations personnel;
- implementation of a physical fitness training program; and
- the program was expanded by an additional four crews. There are now 31 FMFP crews plus two provisional/performance improvement crews for a total of 33 six-person crews (198 persons).

As part of SERM's regional work to maintain partnerships with Aboriginal groups:

- Shield and West Boreal EcoRegion worked with the Mudjatik Co-management Board to address resource management concerns;
- SERM's partnership with James Smith First Nation helped bring about the Fort-a-la-Corne access management proposal; and
- Partnership with bands in the north-east (e.g., Shoal Lake, Red Earth, Cumberland House) supported efforts to restore the Cumberland Delta's moose population to historic levels. An issue under discussion is how to restrict the number of moose taken by First Nations hunters without infringing on the Treaty right to hunt.

Shield EcoRegion began using a revised Traditional Resource Use policy for Lac La Ronge Provincial Park.

Work to determine SERM's role in enforcing First Nation bylaws was expanded to examine issues such as enforcement options on Indian Reserves, bylaw development and wildlife population management techniques.

Feedback from educators indicated a pilot "relationship building" program with the Saulteaux First Nation and Parkland EcoRegion was a success. The pilot featured discussions about resource management, Treaty rights, etc. It has been offered to the Mosquito First Nation in 2000-01.

SERM and the First Nations of Beardy's/Okemasis and One Arrow signed a formal partnership agreement on July 1, 1999 to jointly develop infrastructure and programing at Fort Carlton Historic Park. Discussions have focused on specific projects.

Activities in 1999-2000 that were supported by SERM's partnership with Montreal Lake First Nation include:

- A spawning run study in the Waskesiu River was completed with direct assistance from band members. The study led to a successful commercial operation to trap suckers (approximately 48,000 kilograms of suckers were taken from the Waskesui River and provided more than $20,000 to commercial fishermen); and
- Work under an elk relocation and research project continued with an additional six elk outfitted with satellite tracking radio collars.

Nekaneet First Nation, FSIN and SERM worked to reconcile conflicts over First Nations' hunting and recreational use of the West Block of Cypress Hills Interprovincial Park during the summer. One of the results is a new interpretive project to better inform park visitors of First Nations' history and rights in the Cypress Hills.

C. Public Involvement/Partnerships Agenda

There was an increase in northern involvement in SERM's Cumulative Effects Monitoring (CEM) program:

- Field offices in Southend, Wollaston, Stony and Pinehouse participated in a multi-year program to monitor the effects of acid rain;
- Students from five northern schools (Beauval, Pinehouse, Buffalo Narrows, Ile-a-la-Crosse and La Ronge) joined SERM staff from fire caches in La Loche, Stony Rapids, Southend and Uranium City to monitor rain pH as part of a study on acid deposition in northern Saskatchewan; and
- Staff gave CEM sampling presentations at Black Lake and Fond du Lac schools and made a Q&A videotape to inform and educate people about the program.

SERM sought to expand partnerships to protect the environment and foster regulatory compliance:

- SERM signed a Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) with Moose Jaw Asphalt in November, 1999. The MOU is intended to help industry, government and the public address and manage environmental issues in a constructive and comprehensive manner;
- SERM completed a review and revision of the Prairie Provinces Water Board (PPWB) water quality objectives for border sites along the Saskatchewan-Alberta boundary. The objectives will aid in ensuring good water quality in those streams entering the province from Alberta while providing quality measurement tools;
- SERM, Saskatchewan Health and Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food (SAF) developed a pilot project to deal with crop residual burning; and
- Environmental Protection Branch (EPB) continued to develop and maintain partnership agreements with major industries, Saskatchewan cities, business organizations and numerous stakeholder groups. There were 43 such agreements in place in 1999-2000. An example of a result arising from partnerships is the pollution prevention guide for Saskatchewan printers that was completed with the assistance of Environment Canada and the Saskatchewan Graphic Arts Association.

SERM worked to raise public awareness, understanding and promotion of fire management and forest protection. Stakeholders were consulted during a review of SERM's Fire Policy that has resulted in a new draft policy paper. Public meetings to review the draft policy were scheduled to begin in April, 2000.

SERM partnered with corporate interests to protect and manage sensitive species and ecological systems impacted by resource development activities. In 1999-2000:

- SERM, Sask Power, Sask Water and Environment Canada worked together to implement conservation actions at Lake Diefenbaker to provide long-term protection for endangered Piping Plovers and to integrate water management needs along the South Saskatchewan River. Similar conservation partnerships were begun with the City of Moose Jaw (to protect burrowing owls) and with Sask Power and the residents of Cumberland House (to recover sturgeon impacted by hydroelectric development);
- Most of the remaining undisturbed woodland caribou habitat occurs within the Shield EcoRegion. A regional Wildlife Biologist sits on the Woodland Caribou Working Group and assists in coordinating regional participation in species recovery planning; and
- SERM continues to develop 20 year Forest Management Plans that include measures to protect and manage endangered species and ecological systems as well as support Saskatchewan's Representative Area Network (RAN). See page 20 for additional information on RAN.

SERM involved stakeholders in a process to identify recommended sites and plan subdivisions in the Shield EcoRegion. Planning and management concerns of subdivisions (e.g., Potato Lake) were integrated in the La Ronge Integrated Land Use Management Plan through a "Developed Area" land use management zone. The concept of developing a Northern Parks Advisory Committee was introduced and discussed with northern communities.

SERM encourages industry and communities to take a more active role in fuels management, offering hazzard assessments and technical advice to mitigate danger. There was an increase in interest in how people, businesses, communities and municipalities can help reduce the risk of losses from fires since the Mallard Fire near LaRonge in May, 1999. SERM personnel worked with the LaRonge town council to establish a vegetation break around the town perimeter and there are plans to establish/widen vegetation breaks around the perimeter of LaRonge Indian Band Reserves. Staff met with cottage and recreation subdivision councils to discuss reducing the vulnerability of cabins and lots to fires. Outfitters and mining sites were contacted to discuss reducing fire hazards; meetings were held with representatives of LaRonge Town Council and bush operators to remove burnt salvage trees to enhance regeneration.

D. Economic Development Agenda

Meetings were held with representatives from forest industry, First Nations, Métis and potential economic expansion partners to discuss the restructuring and expansion of Saskatchewan's forest industry. Forest Ecosystems Branch (FEB) worked with organizations granted conditional wood allocations to begin moving toward long-term Forest Management Agreements (FMAs). SERM facilitated partnerships to support economic opportunities in the forest sector.

SERM worked with the Saskatchewan Environment and Industry Managers Association (SEIMA) to form the Environmental Industry Sector Team in support of Saskatchewan's developing environmental industry sector.

SERM and Northern Affairs released *Options to Revitalize Commercial Fishing in Saskatchewan: The Year 2000 and Beyond* (referred to as the Blue Paper) in January 2000. The Blue Paper identified 21 options how federal and provincial governments, commercial fishermen and industry can work to improve the viability of Saskatchewan's commercial fishing industry. Progress on Blue Paper action items included:

- purchased new technology (i.e., trap nets, hydro acoustic equipment) to assist commercial fishermen to maximize allocated quotas and to enable government to obtain data on fish populations;
- trained commercial fishermen to use trap nets;
- explored new market opportunities for commercial fish and fish products with FFMC; and
- explored new funding opportunities to enhance infrastructure and operational capacity of the Saskatchewan Commercial Fishermens Cooperative Federation Ltd.

SERM and SAF met with the Federal Commissioner of Aquaculture to assess the status of Saskatchewan's aquaculture industry and to explore the potential to expand the industry. The department participates on a National Task Force on Aquaculture Industry Development in Canada that will report to federal and provincial Fisheries Ministers. Discussions were begun with SAF to explore research funding for new technology in the aquaculture industry (e.g., cage culturing alternative species; more ecologically friendly aquaculture systems; alternative, locally-produced food sources for cage cultured fish).

The department worked to develop surplus fish stocks for international trade. A discussion paper on "Trade and Market of Native Fish and Wildlife Species" was under development and business contacts were made with Harbin and Shanghai in China.

SERM explored the feasibility and potential marketing of programs (e.g., recycling, forest protection and fire management, oil/toxic chemicals spill prevention and waste management, water management) in Asian-Pacific Rim nations. SERM staff joined forestry/environmental industry representatives on a mission to China to promote Saskatchewan environmental industry processes such as sewage and animal waste treatment technology.

SERM's Communication Services Branch lead a multi-department project to promote sustainable development in Saskatchewan's forest sector. A series of events and news releases announced initiative milestones. Key messages focused on SERM's role in supporting sustainable economic development of forest resources and protecting the long-term health of forest ecosystems. SERM established an internal Economic Development Forum to provide economic information and analysis to the department.

E. Federal-Provincial Affairs

SERM participated in several CCME committees working to protect human and environmental health. Examples of activity in 1999-2000 included:

- developing emission standards for sectors that emit mercury or dioxins and furans. Canada-Wide Standards (CWS) were produced to help reduce mercury emissions (e.g., draft air emission standards for mercury from base-metal and waste incineration sectors, mercury and methyl mercury guidelines for protection of aquatic life);
- participated in the CCME Soil Quality Guidelines Task Group to develop soil and tissues guidelines supporting CWS for dioxins and furans. The task group also worked to support the CWS Petroleum Hydrocarbons initiative,
- worked on the CCME Water Quality Guidelines Task Group to revise comprehensive national environmental guidelines and draft a national water quality index system to assess and rank the relative quality of waterbodies, and
- developed CCME CWS for benzene.

SERM built on work done reviewing an Assessment of Carbon Disulphide as a Canadian Environmental Protection Act (CEPA) Toxic Substance by identifying the implications and impacts of these substances and programs in Saskatchewan.

Work continued to complete a review of Solid Waste 2000 (including measurement criteria); a Statistics Canada survey showed a 26.5 per cent reduction in waste generation in Saskatchewan.

On November 30,1999 the Canada-Saskatchewan Agreement on Environmental Assessment Cooperation was signed by Canada's Minister of the Environment, David Anderson, and SERM Minister, Buckley Belanger. This agreement establishes administrative processes to implement the Sub-agreement on Environmental Assessment signed by CCME in January 1998 as part of the Canada-Wide Accord on Environmental Harmonization. It is the first bilateral agreement on environmental assessment signed by Canada and Saskatchewan. Projects that require a review under both federal and provincial environmental assessment legislation will undergo a single, cooperative assessment, meeting the legal requirements of both governments while maintaining respective roles and responsibilities. The agreement also provides for periodic implementation and effectiveness reviews. The public was able to review the draft agreement during consultations held from July to September 1999. By mutual agreement, discussions with Manitoba and Alberta to develop similar agreements among the three provinces were postponed to allow the each party to complete discussions with the federal government.

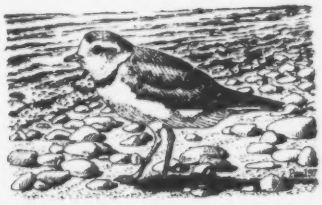
SERM participated in national-level consultations with stakeholders involved in program/regulatory revisions in accordance with the National Action Plan on Ozone-Depleting Substances.

SERM and Saskatchewan Labour began negotiations with the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSC) to address regulatory overlap and duplication in the uranium mining industry. These negotiations resulted in a MOU outlining a process to identify areas of overlap and duplication and a commitment to develop recommendations for a more efficient and effective regulatory regime, one that (to the fullest possible extent) provides a "one window" regulatory approach. An independent fact finding study was commissioned. A federal-provincial cost-sharing agreement to clean up Gunnar and Lorado uranium mine sites was drafted; negotiations with federal agencies to implement clean-up plans continue. The Shield EcoRegion itemized areas of overlap and held meetings with Environmental Quality Committees to review annual uranium mine operating licences.

Seventy-seven projects were reviewed or assessed (16 carried over from previous years) and two EIAs were completed in 1999-2000.

The Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency determines whether new uranium projects (or changes to existing projects) require review under the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act (CEA). Issues raised by federal agencies are incorporated into project-specific guidelines prepared by SERM's Environmental Assessment (EA) Branch to assist proponents conduct an environmental impact assessment (EIA) and prepare environmental impact statements (EIS). This allows requirements of both federal and provincial approval processes to be met and subsequent reviews coordinated. In 1999-2000, federal-provincial reviews were conducted on:

- transport of low grade McArthur River uranium ore to Key Lake for milling;
- transport of Cigar Lake mine waste rock to McClean Lake for storage in the mined-out Sue C pit; and
- milling Cigar Lake uranium ore at Rabbit Lake.



Piping Plover

Implementation of the Accord for the Protection of Species at Risk in Canada included negotiating with the federal government and other provinces/territories on a national approach (based on complementary legislation), landowner and industry cooperation, and habitat protection through stewardship activities. Jurisdictions defined their species recovery approach, integrated the roles of the Committee on Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada and the Minister's Council, developed a report on species status, and advocated for effective federal legislation.

SERM is a signatory to the Canada-Saskatchewan MOU on Water, and staff worked to coordinate and integrate federal and provincial sustainable water management activities in Saskatchewan, including:

- meetings to facilitate communication and coordinate activities among involved organizations;
- activity plans were developed and reviewed to ensure compatible strategies and resources were integrated in an efficient, planned manner; and
- database information (e.g., water collection and storage, analysis capability) was accessible and easily shared.

In 1999-2000, EPB collected sulphur oxides (SOx) and nitrogen oxides (NOx) total emissions data from various Saskatchewan industries for inclusion in the annual report of the Canada-Wide Strategy for Acid Rain Post 2000 in Saskatchewan.

SERM participated on the National Task Force on Recreational Fishing and implemented recommendations appropriate for Saskatchewan. In conjunction with other provinces, Saskatchewan worked to:

- establish a National Recreational Fishing Web Site by 2001;
- coordinate with industry to launch a major National Family Fishing media message (including designating a National Recreational Fishing Month); and
- develop initiatives to recruit youth in recreational fishing.

The Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) expanded its presence and level of activity in Saskatchewan and other provincial jurisdictions, assuming greater responsibility for fish habitat management. Work is ongoing to clarify adjusted responsibilities and establish a redefined working relationships with DFO. SERM, DFO, Alberta and Manitoba conducted joint research on in-stream flow needs under the Federal-Provincial Freshwater Science Agreement.

The Upper Assiniboine River Study was extended to December 31, 2000. SERM is a member of the Upper Assiniboine River Study Management Committee that completed:

- documentation of current and emerging water-related issues; and
- an assessment of the impact of land use changes and drainage activities on the basin's water and related resources.

Next year the group will develop a framework plan to addresses future supply and water demand scenarios.

Fire management border agreements with Alberta, Manitoba and NWT were finalized. These agreements permit "quick strikes" with aircraft and initial attack crews on fires that start within 20 kilometers of a border. Expenses must exceed $30,000 before approval is required from the affected province. A similar agreement with Parks Canada is pending further discussion.

Goal 2 Ecosystem Management

Expand our knowledge and understanding of ecosystems and ecosystem components, enhance the protection of biodiversity and ecological processes and adjust current resource harvesting and land use practices to maintain ecological integrity.

In 1999-2000, SERM signed 10 conservation easements encompassing 1,543 hectares.

In 1999-2000 there were 590 licensed water works, 469 licensed sewage works, 758 active waste disposal grounds, and 297 licensed commercial liquid waste haulers in Saskatchewan.

In 1999-2000, 19,216 water samples were analyzed and 93,567 measurements stored in ESQUADAT, SERM's water quality database (containing more than 426,000 sample results and 3.17 million measurements).

Objectives

A. Biodiversity and Ecological Integrity

1. Complete the Biodiversity Action Plan in partnership with other departments and Crown corporations;
2. Complete a new Forest Ecosystem Protection Policy to update the overall framework for the fire management program and set new policy direction for forest insect and disease management;
3. Implement the Saskatchewan Wild Species at Risk Action Plan;
4. Continue implementation of the provincial Representative Areas Network (RAN) program with emphasis on stakeholder and public consultation processes;
5. Complete the Fish and Wildlife Policy Framework incorporating ecosystem management and greater community involvement;
6. Develop a strategy to deal with the ecological effects of invasive exotic species;
7. Complete the Ecological Reserve Policy Review;
8. Develop an ecologically based strategic plan for moose management in Saskatchewan, focusing on integrating moose protection and management objectives with forest land use activities;
9. Begin developing a framework for cumulative effects assessment and increase awareness within the department on cumulative effects assessment; and
10. Complete the national sage grouse recovery plan.

B. Aquatic Ecosystems

1. Ensure SERM fulfills it's responsibility to implement the *Integrated Water Management Strategy*;
2. Collaborate with other government agencies and the private sector to establish and begin to monitor a network of aquatic ecosystem sampling stations;
3. Establish a water quality index as an indicator of aquatic ecosystem health; and
4. Complete a *Fisheries Assessment Action Plan* for Saskatchewan.

C. Ecological Framework

1. Complete Ecosite Classification (detail level four in Saskatchewan's ecological land classification system); and
2. Complete Saskatchewan Forest Vegetation Inventory (SFVI) standards for Saskatchewan forested lands. Begin a field data collection program.

D. Ecosystem-based Planning and Implementation

1. Complete the Ecological Planning Project and begin using the planning framework to implement an overall EcoRegional plan
2. Complete an inventory of SERM Ecosystem Management Guidelines and recommendations report;
3. Initiate a watershed planning process for the rural municipalities (RMs) of Churchbridge and Langenburg (involving the Smith Creek Watershed Association and other concerned groups within the watershed);
4. Refine the Comparative Risk Assessment Model to determine priorities; help staff to apply the model as a tool to establish program priorities; and
5. Implement and integrate ecosystem-based initiatives at the EcoRegion level.

E. Science, Research and Monitoring

1. Establish the Monitoring Science Panel, complete science development and pilot the Forest Impacts Monitoring Program for Saskatchewan;
2. Develop an ecological monitoring model and supporting tools for staff;
3. Host an ecological monitoring conference in April, 2000;
4. Implement provincial fish and wildlife inventory, biological data collection and research programs to assess status and manage populations sustainably. Focus on coordinated delivery of a provincial monitoring and assessment program in partnership with resource users, industry and interest groups;
5. Establish a science structure to promote effective program integration and to establish a science base for department programs;
6. Develop and implement an Ecosystem Monitoring Pilot Project;
7. Develop monitoring capabilities for acid rain and for emissions from local pulp and saw mills; and
8. Host professional development and science information workshops to increase knowledge and abilities of SERM, Saskatchewan Wetlands Corporation (SWCC) and conservation partners to address ecological issues.

F. Integration and Communication

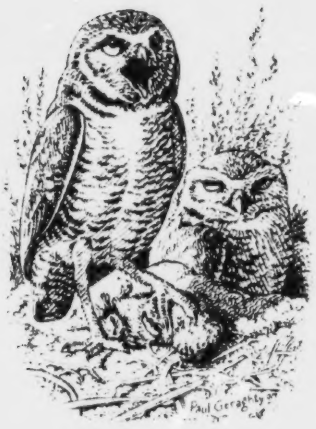
1. Redesign the department's communication strategy to incorporate messages on ecosystem management as a core department strategy; integrate ecosystem management into all department communications; and
2. Develop tools to support staff development in ecosystem-based management.

Activities and Accomplishments

A. Biodiversity and Ecological Integrity

An Interdepartmental Steering Committee was established help guide development of the *Biodiversity Action Plan*. A draft document was prepared for public consultation; the final Action Plan is on track for completion in 2000-01.

SERM's new Forest Ecosystem Protection Policy updates the overall framework of the fire management program and establishes new direction for forest insect and disease management. Informational meetings were offered in the major communities in the north in the spring of 1999 to ensure all forest users were heard. Major recommendations raised during the meetings were incorporated in a draft policy document circulated to more than 1,200 Saskatchewan stakeholders in March 1999. A second round of public consultations is scheduled for the spring of 2000.



Burrowing Owls

In 1999-2000 SERM activities under the *Saskatchewan Wild Species at Risk Action Plan* focused on listing species, implementing recovery priorities, habitat stewardship, corporate partnerships and amendments to *The Wildlife Act* to deal with "vulnerable"species. Status assessments were completed for an additional 30 species considered for protection under provincial species at risk legislation (*The Wildlife Act, 1998*). Ongoing efforts continued under recovery plans developed for Swift Fox, Burrowing Owl, Piping Plover and Whooping Cranes. Grassland EcoRegion worked to complete a national Sage Grouse recovery plan.

Work continued to build Saskatchewan's Representative Area Network (RAN) network of ecologically important lands and waters. Saskatchewan has over 4.5 million hectares of land throughout the province designated as part of the RAN. The focus in 1999-2000 was to complete site designations, develop management plans for each site and to establish monitoring targets within specific sites. No new

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RAN sites were designated in 1999-2000 but considerable staff resources were dedicated to site identification and to organizing public meetings and communication. Public consultations were held as part of the Amisk-Atik and Dore-Smoothstone Lakes Land Use Planning processes. Discussions were also held across the Taiga Shield ecozone. While reaching consensus on site designation, particularly in remote locations, has taken more time than was originally anticipated, the public's involvement and support of RAN are essential to success.

Their Future is in Our Hands

The *Fish and Wildlife Policy Framework* was completed and implemented as an interim policy to allow SERM to implement recommendations while continuing discussions with Aboriginal people. Resulting policy improvements are expected in 2000-01. SERM completed an internal Ecological Reserve Policy review.

A strategy to deal with the ecological effects of invasive exotic species was developed; recommendations are contained in the paper entitled *Strangers In A New World: The Problem of Exotic Organisms in Saskatchewan*.

SERM undertook a major review of the provincial moose management program (the first since 1977), and developed a long-term conservation plan for consultation with First Nations and stakeholders. The plan recommended regional moose population and harvest goals (moose numbers have declined in some parts of the province, but remain stable or increased in other areas), identifies harvest options and makes conservation and management recommendations.

SERM increased awareness among staff by offering workshops on Cumulative Effects Assessment.

B. Aquatic Ecosystems

The Water Management Framework (WMF) articulates Saskatchewan's position on water issues and provides a process for identifying and dealing with new inter-jurisdictional issues as they arise. The WMF serves to: recognize competing demands for water resources in a fair and equitable manner, balance economic development and sustainable resource use, and outline actions to protect aquatic ecosystems, aquifers and wetlands. The following actions were initiated in 1999-2000:

- developed indicators and monitored the health of drinking water sources and aquatic ecosystems;
- established criteria on aquatic ecosystem integrity to guide economic development activities;
- ensured aquatic ecosystems and riparian areas are considered in the RAN;
- reviewed screening procedures and expanded existing protocols on non-native plant and animal introductions into Saskatchewan;
- developed a policy for conserving riparian habitat on a watershed basis;
- prepared a background discussion paper on *Riparian Area Guidelines;*
- promoted buffer strips and environmental reserves to protect certain areas from the effects of forestry, mining and agricultural activities;
- implemented mandatory operator training and certification for water and wastewater operations; reviewed municipal water and wastewater treatment operations, monitored practices and provided support and advice; and
- explored opportunities for increased development of the aquaculture industry.

The Grassland EcoRegion established a series of aquatic sampling stations to provide basic data on the EcoRegion's major lakes and rivers; sampling began in the fall of 1999.

The department is participating in national-level activity to establish a water quality index as an indicator of aquatic ecosystem health; approval of a draft report is pending.

SERM completed a Fisheries Assessment Action Plan that:

- incorporates new hydroacoustic technology to monitor fish abundance and enhance population assessment;
- utilizes anglers and the outfitting industry to improve fisheries data collection; and
- outlines assessment methods to ensure sustainable commercial and sport fishing industries.

C. Ecological Framework

SERM is on track with a five-year program (1999-2003) to complete Ecosite Classification (the fourth level of detail of Saskatchewan's ecological land classification). Management and operational guidelines are being linked to ecological designations.

Saskatchewan Forest Vegetation Inventory (SFVI) standards for forested lands were completed and a field data collection program was implemented during the summer of 1999.

D. Ecosystem-based Planning and Implementation

Parkland EcoRegion piloted *An Ecosystem-based Planning Framework and Source Book for Preparing EcoRegional Plans.* All EcoRegions used the guide in 1999-2000 to develop their Ecological Operating Plans and establish their long-term goals and objectives.

Recognizing that guidelines are a key tool to communicate with both staff and the public, an inventory of SERM's ecosystem management guidelines was begun. A total of 221 guidelines were identified and reviewed; SERM's policy manual will be revised to incorporate the recommended changes.

Attempts to develop a watershed plan with the RM of Churchbridge to curtail illegal drainage activities has been unsuccessful to date; significant enforcement was required to protect the watershed.

The EcoRegions conducted risk assessments of their respective issues. Issues were prioritized and the results of the exercise were used to prepare regional ecosystem management plans and to set a context for SERM's budget planning process. EPB used a risk assessment exercise to prioritize environmental issues on a province-wide basis.

E. Science, Research and Monitoring

Established in May 1999, the Provincial Science Advisory Board held its first meeting in November. The group reviewed a proposed monitoring program, including field tested sampling protocols for vegetation and water monitoring. Adjusted protocols were ready for implementation in the 2000 field season.

SERM, the Canadian Plains Research Centre and Saskatchewan Eco-Network prepared to host a *Monitoring for Ecosystem Health* conference. Over 200 delegates discussed types of monitoring, identified challenges and work towards common objectives in ecosystem health monitoring. Speakers included representatives from the International Society for Ecosystem health, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Global Forest Watch, Environment Canada and the World Resources Institute.

SERM implemented a provincial fish and wildlife inventory, biological data collection and research programs to assess status and manage populations sustainably. Activities included: antelope herd structure survey; obtaining biological samples from hunter check stations; fish scale collection (to determine aging); upland bird and deer observations (to estimate productivity); collect fish samples (for mercury analysis); inventories to estimate sturgeon habitat needs and to provide eggs for hatcheries; analysis of fur and game statistics (to assess population status and trends); and a major inventory of moose populations in the forest.

SERM worked to establish a scientific structure and base to support effective program integration. Accomplishments in 1999-2000 included establishing annual training sessions on ecosystem-based management and a Science Advisory Board for the Forest Management Impacts Monitoring Program.

Shield EcoRegion piloted an ecosystem health monitoring project that prioritized ecosystem health issues, and identified monitoring indicators. The Ecosystem Monitoring pilot project was designed to be compatible with SERM's existing Cumulative Effects Monitoring program and provincial program needs. Aquatic, riparian and ecosite land monitoring sampling was conducted at Cree, Tazin and Misaw Lake sites and aquatic monitoring stations were established on Lac La Ronge. FEB staff developed forest classification plots by the same locations.

West Boreal EcoRegion developed six stations to monitor the area's acid rain capabilities and emissions from local pulp and saw mills. Meetings were scheduled with local industry and residents to address air quality concerns.

SERM hosted professional development and science information workshops to increase knowledge and abilities of SERM, SWCC and other conservation partners. In 1999-2000 workshops were held on: using hydroaccoustics technology, aquatic/riparian habitat evaluation procedures, plant identification and shorebird biology. In August, 1999 SERM partnered with Wyoming, Colorado, DFO, Nature Saskatchewan, Environment Canada, SWCC and the University of Regina to host a conference on ecological economics.

F. Integration and Communication

Ecosystem management was identified as a key message area in SERM communications and elements of it were incorporated in most major communications by the department. SERM supported staff development in ecosystem-based management. A long term ecosystem management training strategy (focusing on forest protection staff) was developed and an introductory training module offered in February, 2000. Other training initiatives offered in 1999-2000 included four workshops (on forest soils, plant identification, vegetation management and prescribed burning) attended by more than 150 SERM staff and industry representatives.

Saskatchewan's State of the Environment Report 1999 was tabled in the Legislature on April 1, 1999. This report focused on the Boreal Shield Ecozone, providing extensive information on current environmental trends, conditions and emerging issues.

Goal 3 Policies, Legislation and Programs

Strengthen program management capabilities by deleting outdated and developing new or upgraded policies, legislation, programs, strategies and action plans.

Objectives

A. Forestry Agenda

1. Work with other government departments to prioritize, fund and implement the forest industry development plan for Saskatchewan;
2. Establish and carry out a program of planning and negotiating new forest management agreements (FMA), timber supply licences (TSLs) or other permits necessary for the allocation of timber resources available for industry expansion;
3. Ensure new FMA and other new large forest operations incorporate requirements for cost-sharing forest protection services to allow sustainable harvests;
4. Establish and implement a program of Forest Land Use Plans (LUP) for management units related to proposed FMA developments in the Provincial Forest;
5. Implement the *Forest Resources Management Act* and Regulations; and
6. Initiate/complete EIA reviews for 20-year forest management plans proposed by L& M Wood Products, Mistik Management and Weyerhaeuser Timberlands.

B. Climate Change

1. Continue development of a coordinated SERM position and workplan with regard to the climate change issue, including:
   - participate in relevant national climate change processes;
   - participate in provincial processes aimed at developing and implementing a Saskatchewan position on climate change; and
   - encourage:
     - public education and outreach
     - internal capacity development and communications
     - need for monitoring potential impacts and adaptation needs including a study of the vulnerability of boreal forests, demands on fire management and forest protection programs
     - cooperation with other climate change stakeholders
     - develop carbon offsets to reduce levels of CO_2 in the atmosphere
2. Continue to pursue the Carbon Offsets Program by investigating opportunities for implementation.

C. Environmental Protection

1. Consult on a proposed strategy to revise provincial environmental legislation and prepare an action plan;
2. Evaluate the REACT pilot;
3. Complete and implement the environmental protection risk assessment policy;
4. Revise the Spill Control Regulations;
5. Monitor the existing contaminated site liability policy to determine a potential need for regulatory changes. Determine the feasibility of developing a sectoral initiative for orphan site remediation in the downstream petroleum sector;
6. Develop a strategy to address product stewardship initiatives in Saskatchewan;
7. Continue development of an environmental protection process for oil and gas activities;

The **Saskatchewan Pesticide Return** program was launched in the fall of 1999 to collect unwanted farm pesticide chemicals. About 130 retailers in Southern Saskatchewan collected a total of 15,000 litres of liquids and 5,000 kilograms of solids for disposal in an environmentally responsible manner. The Crop Protection Institute initiated the program in cooperation with SERM, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, SAF, the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration and the Canadian Association of Agricultural Retailers.

8. Seek an agreement with the potash industry on best approaches and time frames to address growing tailings spoil piles, review EIS of potash companies proposing to expand;
9. Develop a policy to address waste management regulatory issues in the upstream oil and gas industry;
10. Finalize financial assurance requirements for the potash industry and review associated waste management issues;
11. Implement regulations for mandatory certification of water and wastewater facility operators;
12. Encourage regionalization of landfills by emphasizing benefits as demonstrated by REACT and other success stories;
13. Research and design air quality emission standards for the new oriented strand board mill in Hudson Bay; and
14. Work with partners to monitor potential impacts of Alberta's millennium project on acid deposition in Saskatchewan.

D. Integrated Water Management Strategy

1. Develop and implement a 1999-2000 Action Plan to address recommendations in the provincial *Water Management Framework* (WMF);
2. Work with SaskWater and members of the Water Appeal Board to clarify the role and reporting function of the Water Appeal Board;
3. Establish an intra-provincial water management committee to identify joint priorities and budgets; cooperate with SaskWater and Crown Investments Corporation to implement the WMF;
4. Work with SaskWater to achieve WMF objectives, clarify roles and responsibilities and remove overlap/duplication in water management;
5. SERM, SAF, SWCC and SaskWater to streamline the review and approval process for licensing water-related projects; and
6. In conjunction with SaskPower and SaskWater, survey environmental concerns relating to hydro operations along the Saskatchewan River System.

E. Crown Land Management Policy and Land Use Planning

1. Further to participate in the province's Crown Land Management Strategy;
2. Complete planning processes for Prince Albert Model Forest and La Ronge Integrated Land Use and Development Plan;
3. Continue planning processes for Amisk-Atik Integrated Forest Land Use Plan and Dore-Smoothstone Integrated Forest Land Use Plan;
4. Initiate planning processes for Forest Fringe Integrated Land and Resource Use Plan and the Athabasca Road Corridor; and
5. Continue implementation and follow-up for the Great Sand Hills Land Use Strategy, the Manitou Sand Hills Integrated Resource Management Plan and the Pasquia-Porcupine Integrated Forest Land Use Plan.

F. Fish and Wildlife

1. Review the "Sale of Wildlife" Policy;
2. Develop a policy to deal with the use of wildlife for art, ceremonial or religious purposes;
3. Develop a policy for conservation officers and SAF game farm inspections to regulate the game farm industry;
4. Continue to deliver SERM's wildlife damage prevention programs in cooperation with Environment Canada, other provincial government departments, conservation agencies and agricultural producers; and
5. Enable more sustainable management of the fish resource by developing a new resource allocation policy.

Smokey Bear was kept busy making 69 presentations and visiting 37 schools.

G. Fire Management and Forest Protection

1. Meet expanded fire protection needs by completing a comprehensive business analysis to determine Saskatchewan's optimum fire suppression model;
2. Implement the recommendations proposed by the Sustained Fire Action Plan;
3. Implement the recommendations contained in the Saskatchewan Fire Management Preparedness Assessment;
4. Examine the future delivery of fire fighting capability, e.g., emergency fire fighters and contract fire crews;
5. Support the Canadian Interagency Forest Fire Centre (CIFFC) under the Mutual Aid Resource Sharing (MARS) agreement.
6. Develop fire protection plans for provincial parks and department managed Crown lands and provide expertise on prescribed burns; and
7. Incorporate fire planning into forest management agreements, as well as annual, five-year and 20-year forest management plans.

H. Parks and Special Places

1. Coordinate SERM's Commercial Outdoor Recreation (Ecotourism) Policy;
2. Complete the *Parks Tomorrow* follow-up strategies:
   - The Conservation Action Plan
   - framework to set future directions for the services and facilities for each park land
   - a Park System Financial/Business Management Plan including proposals for re-allocation of existing funding complete a long-term capital/infrastructure program
   - launch a long term client research strategy
   - develop a sponsorship/partnership strategy for park lands
   - initiate a long-term marketing strategy.
3. Complete public consultation on the Parks Tomorrow follow-up strategies;
4. Complete a policy on park hunting and related outfitting issues;
5. Complete park funding proposal/rates and fees proposal for 2000/2001;
6. Complete a staff housing policy;
7. Work with SaskWater to complete two major capital developments at Pike Lake Provincial Park; and
8. Park Management Planning-complete inaugural Business/Marketing Plans and update the Park Management Strategies for Danielson and Buffalo Pound Parks; implement the Cypress Park Business/Marketing Plan.

I. Enforcement and Compliance

1. Determine the feasibility of a common Enforcement Communications Centre for law enforcement staff in conjunction with Saskatchewan Highways and Transportation and Saskatchewan Finance; and
2. Develop and implement an emergency response plan to assist other law enforcement agencies in responding to Y2K public safety and security threats.

Approximately $5.93 million was spent on salarirs for 10,322 casual emergency firefighters (the vast majority of them northern residents) to protect our forest resources. In the Full Response Zone (i.e. the more densely populated southern portion of the Northern Provincial Forest) initial attack efforts were successful in keeping fires small, limiting fire losses to less than half of the ten-year average (67,441 hectares compared to average losses of 166,735 hectares in the full response zone). Over the summer of 1999, SERM worked to suppress 735 forest fires; in total 173,700 hectares of forest land was lost to wildfires. Northern Air Operations fire suppression aircraft flew 3,131 hours.

Activities and Accomplishments

A. Forestry Agenda

SERM worked with Northern Affairs, Economic and Cooperative Development, Intergovernmental and Aboriginal Affairs, and SAF to implement the forest sector development plan. Following the Premier's announcement of conditional timber allocations to several partnerships, all with significant northern and First Nations participation, work began to ensure the sustainability of forestry companies' proposed operations and to obtain harvest authorization. Steps included preparing annual operating plans, EIS and 20-year forest management plans. All were developed with public consultation. Expectations are these processes will take two to three years to complete.

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In May 1999, the government signed a new FMA with SaskFor MacMillan Limited Partnership, based in Hudson Bay. The government also negotiated with Weyerhaeuser Canada to develop a new FMA, one that reflects the amended boundaries of their agreement area and their new timber volumes. First steps were taken to develop TSLs for organizations granted new conditional allocations from the Weyerhaeuser surplus (for most, TSLs will be an interim step toward a longer-term FMA). Technical reviews of Weyerhaeuser's and Meetoos Products Ltd. Partnership's five-year TSLs were begun.

SaskFor MacMillan's FMA included provisions for the company and SERM to share responsibility for managing forest insects and diseases. (The government retains primary responsibility for forest fire protection.) This is in keeping with SERM's stated objective to ensure sustainable harvests by requiring new FMAs (and any other new large forest operation) to incorporate cost-sharing forest protection requirements.

A program to establish and implement Forest Land Use Plans for management units related to proposed FMA developments in the Provincial Forest are on track for Fort a la Corne, Nisbet, and Besnard (Pinehouse-Dipper Planning Area). Evaluations for Amisk-Atik timber supply area and the North-Central (formerly LaRonge timber supply area) were prepared.

The *Forest Resources Management Act* and Regulations came into force on April 1, 1999. Workshops to further understanding of the Act and regulations among commercial forestry operators, industry and SERM staff were held in April and May, 1999. Shield EcoRegion staff participated in an Operational Forestry Working Group providing input into new standards and guidelines and developing an operational model for program delivery in the EcoRegions.

B. Climate Change

Climate Change is a complex issue with many uncertainties. Several models were used to develop a "range finding" approach to fundamental issues related to achieving Koyoto targets. Models indicate attaining target levels will lead to sustained, long-term nega ive impacts, e.g., a reduction in gross domestic product ranging from zero to three per cent with the economic impact to Saskatchewan expected to be higher than the national average. Other activities included: an ongoing program to increase SERM staff's level of awareness about predicted impacts of climate change on provincial resources; an assessment of the potential impacts of climate change on forestry, parks and sustainable lands; evaluation of adaptation strategies of prairie taxa and human adaptation to changes in prairie biodiversity.

In November 1999 SERM and SaskPower signed a ground-breaking Carbon Offsets agreement. SaskPower pays SERM to plant seedlings on portions of the northern forest and to establish Forest Carbon Reserves (areas left unharvested). In return, SaskPower receives credit for the carbon these forests are holding to offset the company's overall fossil fuel emissions. The agreement will lead to approximately five million new trees planted over four years. An independent scientific review of the agreement is underway and agencies from Canada and around the world are watching program developments with great interest.

SARCAN RECYCLING
A DIVISION OF THE SASKATCHEWAN ASSOCIATION OF REHABILITATION CENTRES

SARCAN collected over 224 million containers in 1999-2000.

Through the **Pesticide Container Collection Program** approximately 1.6 million containers (a 60 per cent return rate) were collected, cleaned, sealed in specially designed plastic bags and transported to a central depot for recycling.

The Saskatchewan Association for Resource Recovery Corporation (SARRC) collected approximately 15 million litres of used oil, 1.5 million used oil filters and 96,000 kilograms of plastic oil containers. By March 2000 there were 10 EcoCentres and 250 used oil collection facilities in 150 Saskatchewan communities where used oil, filters and containers could be safely disposed.

C. Environmental Protection

An action plan to revise provincial environmental legislation was completed. Other activities pertaining to environmental protection regulations in 1999-2000 included:

- In May 1999 an amendment to *The Litter Control Act* was passed to prevent bulk importations of beverage containers from out of province. The amendment expanded SARCAN's authority to prevent bootlegging, adding enforcement and penalty provisions that will help ensure the long-term viability of a program that provides employment to more than 350 people, most of whom previously received social assistance.
- A review of Spill Control Regulations, initiated at the request of some of Saskatchewan's large industries, proceeded according to schedule. The intent of the review is to maintain a high level of environmental protection (handle hazardous substances/waste spills) while reducing the burden of spill reporting.

SERM evaluated the Municipal Solid Waste Management Assistance Program, including the REACT program in the Humboldt/Watson area. The review required the department develop new ways to analyze, assess and report on the value of the $1.5 million regional solid waste management pilot project. The evaluation provides the public with information on how to develop successful regional waste management projects. Regional systems significantly reduce the number of landfills, reducing the environmental impact and risks associated with many landfills. Parkland EcoRegion met with local government officials and regional interest groups to inform them of the benefits of regionalized landfills (e.g., economics, stewardship and improved quality of life).

Stakeholder consultations were held on changes to the Liquid Domestic Sewage Hauler program to reduce the risk of spreading liquid sewage on farm land. The redesigned program conforms to the principles of environmental protection services (e.g., performance standards, best management practices and risk management).

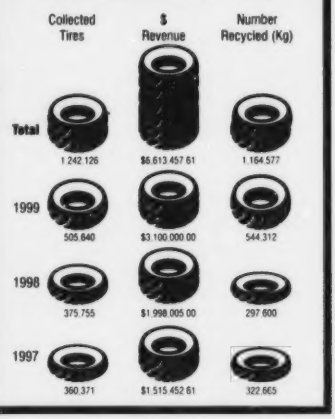
EPB developed and implemented an environmental protection risk assessment policy. SERM's existing contaminated site liability policy was monitored to identify a potential need for regulatory changes. A *Contaminated Site Liability* brochure was produced to provide municipalities with guidelines and options to deal with orphaned sites. EPB worked with the City of Moose Jaw and Western Economic Development and Trade on a Moose Jaw Contaminated Site Recovery Program to clean up and recover three abandoned sites.

Background information for a strategy to address product stewardship initiatives in Saskatchewan was prepared. Consultations with stakeholders on options are ongoing.

Implementation of modifications to the EIA screening process for oil and gas projects began in February 1999. Most oil and gas project reviews are now done at SERM's regional offices, while oil and gas projects with potential for significant impacts are referred to Environmental Assessment Branch for a more detailed review by provincial and federal agencies. In December 1999 SERM distributed a questionnaire to affected parties (i.e., oil and gas companies, land agents and environmental consultants) to access the effectiveness of the modifications; questionnaire results were shared with industry. Work continues to refine review procedures (e.g., defining information requirements for projects on private land, revising Environmental Protection Plan guidelines, improving interdepartmental coordination).

In 1999-2000, the Scrap Tire Management Program, managed and operated by the Saskatchewan Scrap Tire Corporation (SSTC), collected the equivalent of 505,640 passenger tires - over 8.5 million kilograms of rubber. This was processed into playground equipment, flooring and fuels, and was used in civil engineering applications. SSTC initiated Phase II of the Scrap Tire Management Program - removing and recycling scrap tires stockpiled at municipal landfill sites: 8,200 tires were recovered from the Macklin landfill; 2,141 tires from the Regina Beach landfill; 81,000 tires from Weyburn; and 129,000 tires from Yorkton.

Annual Review of Tires Collected, Recycled and Revenue Generated (1997 - 1999)



SERM's Spill Report Centre is a convenient way to report small oil and gas spills. In 1999-2000, $1.2 billion was spent on new exploration and development activity and Saskatchewan's oil and gas sector employed more than 17,000 people.

A joint potash industry/government task force was established to examine decommissioning and reclamation plan options for the province's 10 potash mines. SERM officials chair two new groups - a Steering Committee and a Technical Group - to address issues such as growing tailings spoil piles.

SERM and Saskatchewan Energy and Mines agreed on policy items regulating upstream waste dangerous goods and landfills for oil and gas industry waste. Negotiations continue on related issues.

Financial assurances and reclamation and decommissioning plans for all uranium, gold and base metal mining operations are in place. An approved decommissioning plan and a $29.3 million financial assurance - based primarily on a $48 million pledge of assets - was established for Hudson Bay Mining and Smelting Metallurgical Plant and Tailings Pond System.

Background work to develop and implement standards, guidelines and regulations for mandatory certification of water and wastewater facility operators was completed. The regulations were expected to come into effect September 2000. Approximately 430 water and wastewater facility operators have been certified in the voluntary Operator Certification Program, including 15 who achieved certification through examination.

East Boreal EcoRegion developed air quality standards for the new oriented strand board mill in Hudson Bay. Research into standards was conducted in co-operation with Weyerhaeuser staff from the western provinces and Ontario. Work is ongoing to develop air quality standards for Hudson Bay's old mill.

West Boreal EcoRegion worked with partners to monitor the potential impacts of Alberta's Tar Sands millennium project on acid deposition in Saskatchewan. A working group was established and monitoring began with samples collected from nine northern lakes. Analysis results to date indicate a trend of lower pH in the study area.

D. Integrated Water Management Strategy

Fourteen actions recommended in the province's Water Management Framework Action Plan were begun in 1999-2000, including indicator development, operator certification and monitoring drinking water quality. An intra-provincial water management committee (including SaskWater and Crown Investments Corporation) was established to identify joint priorities and budgets, support WMF implementation, clarify roles/responsibilities and reduce overlap and duplication in water management in Saskatchewan.

A working group was formed to identify challenges and to develop terms of reference clarifying the role and reporting function of the Water Appeal Board (WAB). A review of the WAB and similar appeal boards was conducted and preliminary consultations were held with affected stakeholders and groups.

A strategy to streamline the review and approval process for licensing water-related projects was developed in conjunction with SAF, SWCC and SaskWater. Consultations with affected stakeholders indicate a favourable response and the agencies involved benefitted from improved cooperation. Guidelines were developed to explain the streamlined process to SERM staff. Meetings were held with interested parties (e.g., commercial fishermen, regional SERM staff) to identify and priorize issues.

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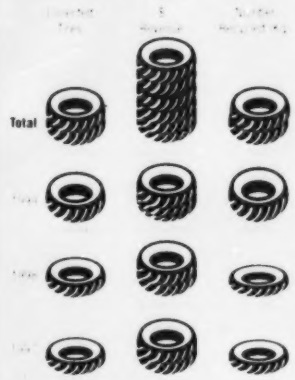

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A multi-agency working group identified major environmental issues resulting from hydro operations along the Saskatchewan river, including:

- impacts of hydro operations on nesting success of piping plover;
- impacts of dissolved oxygen on fish in the Francois Finlay tail waters of Codette Reservoir; and
- impacts of the E. B. Campbell Dam on sturgeon populations in the Cumberland Delta.

E. Crown Land Management Policy and Land Use Planning

Activity under the Crown Land Management Strategy was partitioned into smaller, more manageable components under the direction of a core committee comprised of five departments. Activities to be carried forward into the next fiscal year include: a review of Crown land policy issues, applying land use policy on a trial basis, and identifying opportunities to harmonize GIS-based (i.e., geographic information systems) land data between departments.

Approximately 7,000 land use dispositions (leases/permits for sand and gravel, traditional resource use, wild rice land, etc.) generated $7.7 million in revenue.

SERM, the Chiefs of Black Lake, Fond du Lac, Hatchet Lake Dene Nations and leaders from Stoney Rapids, Uranium City and Camsell Portage signed a first-of-its-kind agreement on Athabasca land use planning and management. This agreement commits SERM, First Nations and municipalities to full cooperation in land use planning and environment and resource management for the entire Athabasca basin.

The expansion of Saskatchewan forestry increased the priority of integrated land use planning for the forested portions of the province.

- The Prince Albert Model Forest (PAMF) Plan was presented to PAMF Board of Directors for approval in March, 2000. A second round of public meetings was held. Effective March 31, 2000 the plan was 90 per cent complete;
- La Ronge Integrated Land Use and Development Plan was 75 per cent complete. A non-government advisory board made consensus recommendations, consultations were completed and a draft plan prepared for review;
- Amisk-Atik Integrated Forest Land Use Plan, 50 per cent complete, was in the evaluation phase. Six RAN sites were proposed through the land use planning process;
- A land use planner was assigned to further the Pinehouse-Dipper Integrated Forest Land Use Plan. Meetings with communities, councils and co-management boards were held August - October, 1999 and a public meeting held in November 1999. A land use planner was also assigned to initiate work on the North Central Integrated Forest Land Use Plan;
- Implementation continued on the established Great Sand Hills Land Use Strategy and the Manitou Sand Hills Integrated Resource Management Plan;
- Land use planning in the Dore-Smoothstone area was suspended when the areas's co-management board resigned in April, 1999;
- Cabinet approved a narrow consultation process for the Forest Fringe in the spring of 1999. Initiation of land use planning is dependent on Cabinet direction related to agroforestry development in the forest fringe; and
- Implementation of the Pasquia-Porcupine Integrated Forest Land Use Plan (approved in 1998) began. A strategic implementation team was formed and a monitoring framework was drafted. The Pasquia-Porcupine Land Use Planning committee and the Cote Band approved an arrangement allowing the Littlewolf Clan to re-establish cabin development on the Peepaw Plains. (The Littlewolf Clan were residents of this area and see this area as traditional lands.)

Fishing creates almost $273 million in annual economic activity, supporting over 5,000 direct and indirect jobs. Total provincial angling license revenue is $3.14 million. In excess of 40 million fish of 10 different species (rainbow, brook, brown, tiger and lake trout, splake, walleye, pike, perch and sturgeon) were stocked in 231 water bodies. There were an estimated 50,000 anglers under the age of 16; 1,662 commercial bait, brine and net fishers harvest 4.4 million kilograms of fish per year.

F. Fish and Wildlife

SERM's policy on the Sale of Wildlife was examined, draft regulations were completed and reviewed. Next steps include a public review of proposed regulations. Consultations with First Nations to develop a policy on the use of wildlife for art, ceremonial or religious purposes are ongoing.

Negotiations continued with SAF regarding escapes/intrusions, unlawful import, and protocols pertaining to the development of Saskatchewan's game fame industry. The discovery of Chronic Wasting Disease in eight game-farmed elk in the province created concern about the health of the province's wild game populations.

SERM continued to refine and deliver wildlife damage prevention programs in cooperation with Environment Canada, other provincial government departments, conservation agencies and agricultural producers. A closer working relationship was developed between Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation and SERM in the area of waterfowl damage prevention.

Wildlife hunting and viewing generates over $74 million in annual economic activity, supporting over 7,800 direct and indirect jobs. Total revenue to the government from non-resident big game hunting licence sales exceeded $1.45 million; direct provincial revenue from the sale of hunting and trapping licenses was $6.70 million; 75,000 people purchased 115,9000 licences to hunt and trap in 1999-2000.

A working committee was established to lead development of a new resource allocation policy to further the sustainable management of fish resources. SERM and the Saskatchewan Outfitters Association redrafted a policy to be presented to the outfitting industry in December 2000.

G. Fire Management and Forest Protection

SERM worked on a comprehensive business analysis to determine Saskatchewan's optimum fire suppression model to meet expanded fire protection needs in the future. A Steering Committee, a Core Working Group and sub-committees (i.e., Values at Risk, Aerial Fleet, Capital Infrastructure, Preparedness Assessment, Sustained Action Assessment, and Performance Indicators) were created to do in-depth background studies required prior to submission of a Cabinet Decision Item (CDI).

Recommendations proposed under SERM's Sustained Fire Action Plan implemented in 1999-2000 were:

- A coordinating panel selected personnel to form four Type 1 and four Type 2 Fire Management Teams. (A Type 1 Fire Management Team consists of six specialists trained to manage larger fires - usually considerable wildland/urban values are at risk - involving 150 to 2000 fire fighters. A Type 2 Fire Management Team typically has four members and manages escaped fires with fewer than 150 fire fighters.);
- Central dispatch and fire management deployment provided by Provincial Fire Centre;
- Coordinate training through a "Forest Technology Diploma" to be offered by Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology (SIAST) in the fall of 2000; and
- Complete fire line certification and standards process.

Recommendations contained in the Saskatchewan Fire Management Preparedness Assessment that were implemented in 1999-2000 included:

- Additional loaded rotary wing patrols;
- Additional fixed wind patrols overlap loaded rotary wing patrols during high and extreme hazards;
- Established a computerized equipment inventory and tracking system to optimize equipment deployment and utilization;
- Established longer-term contracts for four medium lift helicopters and two intermediate lift helicopters;

A multi-agency working group identified major environmental issues resulting from hydro operations along the Saskatchewan river, including:

- impacts of hydro operations on nesting success of piping plover;
- impacts of dissolved oxygen on fish in the Francois Finlay tail waters of Codette Reservoir; and
- impacts of the E. B. Campbell Dam on sturgeon populations in the Cumberland Delta.

E. Crown Land Management Policy and Land Use Planning

Activity under the Crown Land Management Strategy was partitioned into smaller, more manageable components under the direction of a core committee comprised of five departments. Activities to be carried forward into the next fiscal year include: a review of Crown land policy issues, applying land use policy on a trial basis, and identifying opportunities to harmonize GIS-based (i.e., geographic information systems) land data between departments.

SERM, the Chiefs of Black Lake, Fond du Lac, Hatchet Lake Dene Nations and leaders from Stoney Rapids, Uranium City and Camsell Portage signed a first-of-its-kind agreement on Athabasca land use planning and management. This agreement commits SERM, First Nations and municipalities to full cooperation in land use planning and environment and resource management for the entire Athabasca basin.

Approximately 7,000 land use dispositions (leases/permits for sand and gravel, traditional resource use, wild rice land, etc.) generated $7.7 million in revenue.

The expansion of Saskatchewan forestry increased the priority of integrated land use planning for the forested portions of the province.

- The Prince Albert Model Forest (PAMF) Plan was presented to PAMF Board of Directors for approval in March, 2000. A second round of public meetings was held. Effective March 31, 2000 the plan was 90 per cent complete;
- La Ronge Integrated Land Use and Development Plan was 75 per cent complete. A non-government advisory board made consensus recommendations, consultations were completed and a draft plan prepared for review;
- Amisk-Atik Integrated Forest Land Use Plan, 50 per cent complete, was in the evaluation phase. Six RAN sites were proposed through the land use planning process;
- A land use planner was assigned to further the Pinehouse-Dipper Integrated Forest Land Use Plan. Meetings with communities, councils and co-management boards were held August - October, 1999 and a public meeting held in November 1999. A land use planner was also assigned to initiate work on the North Central Integrated Forest Land Use Plan;
- Implementation continued on the established Great Sand Hills Land Use Strategy and the Manitou Sand Hills Integrated Resource Management Plan;
- Land use planning in the Dore-Smoothstone area was suspended when the areas's co-management board resigned in April, 1999;
- Cabinet approved a narrow consultation process for the Forest Fringe in the spring of 1999. Initiation of land use planning is dependent on Cabinet direction related to agroforestry development in the forest fringe; and
- Implementation of the Pasquia-Porcupine Integrated Forest Land Use Plan (approved in 1998) began. A strategic implementation team was formed and a monitoring framework was drafted. The Pasquia-Porcupine Land Use Planning committee and the Cote Band approved an arrangement allowing the Littlewolf Clan to re-establish cabin development on the Peepaw Plains. (The Littlewolf Clan were residents of this area and see this area as traditional lands.)

Fishing creates almost $273 million in annual economic activity, supporting over 5,000 direct and indirect jobs. Total provincial angling license revenue is $3.14 million. In excess of 40 million fish of 10 different species (rainbow, brook, brown, tiger and lake trout, splake, walleye, pike, perch and sturgeon) were stocked in 231 water bodies. There were an estimated 50,000 anglers under the age of 16; 1,662 commercial bait, brine and net fishers harvest 4.4 million kilograms of fish per year.

F. Fish and Wildlife

SERM's policy on the Sale of Wildlife was examined, draft regulations were completed and reviewed. Next steps include a public review of proposed regulations. Consultations with First Nations to develop a policy on the use of wildlife for art, ceremonial or religious purposes are ongoing.

Negotiations continued with SAF regarding escapes/intrusions, unlawful import, and protocols pertaining to the development of Saskatchewan's game fame industry. The discovery of Chronic Wasting Disease in eight game-farmed elk in the province created concern about the health of the province's wild game populations.

SERM continued to refine and deliver wildlife damage prevention programs in cooperation with Environment Canada, other provincial government departments, conservation agencies and agricultural producers. A closer working relationship was developed between Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation and SERM in the area of waterfowl damage prevention.

Wildlife hunting and viewing generates over $74 million in annual economic activity, supporting over 7,800 direct and indirect jobs. Total revenue to the government from non-resident big game hunting licence sales exceeded $1.45 million; direct provincial revenue from the sale of hunting and trapping licenses was $6.70 million; 75,000 people purchased 115,9000 licences to hunt and trap in 1999-2000.

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- Additional loaded rotary wing patrols;
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- Established a computerized equipment inventory and tracking system to optimize equipment deployment and utilization;
- Established longer-term contracts for four medium lift helicopters and two intermediate lift helicopters;

- Medium lift helicopters remain dedicated to the Initial Attack operation except in emergent situations where human life or crew safety is threatened;
- One medium lift helicopter is based in each of the three forested EcoRegions to facilitate SERM's preparedness system;
- Plans were developed to refurbish/replace aging S2F land-based fire bombers by 2001;
- Year round staffing of Regional Duty Officer positions;
- Contract one or more light-medium lift helicopters when Prep Levels reach four or five; and
- Dedicate a group of fire bombers to initial attack for regions with a Prep Level of four or five.

A study to examine the future delivery of fire fighting capability (e.g., emergency fire fighters, contract fire crews) was begun under SERM's broad Fire Model Review.

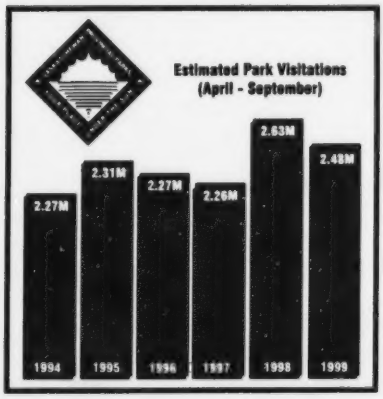
SERM continued strong support to CIFFC under the MARS agreement, including: provided assistance and participation in Canadian working groups (e.g., equipment, aviation, research and technology, training); supported international requests for assistance; and promoted Saskatchewan fire technology during national and international assistance opportunities.

SERM staff worked to identify fire hazards and develop fire protection plans for provincial parks and department managed Crown lands, including using prescribed burns as a method to reduce fuel build-up. In 1999-2000 there were six prescribed burns involving a total of 62 hectares. In Douglas Provincial Park, prescribed burns were conducted to regenerate Aspen, reduce creeping Juniper and shrub cover on grasslands. In Saskatchewan Landing Provincial Park there were burns to rejuvenate decadent old growth sage, reduce leafy spurge, remove thatch layer of dead organic material prior to chemical applications, and to create a firebreak.

Further progress was realized in incorporating fire planning into forest management agreements, annual, five-year and 20-year forest management plans. SERM worked with Mistik Management to complete priorization plans of timber stand inventories and similar plans with other FMA holders are under development.

H. Parks and Special Places

SERM and the Department of Northern Affairs drafted a framework policy and guidelines as part of the work to define SERM's role in commercial outdoor recreation (or ecotourism) and the broader area of non-consumptive outdoor recreation activities.



Activities pertaining to the Parks Tomorrow strategy included:

- A three-year Park System Financial Plan was completed. A detailed park funding/rates and fees proposal was completed for the 2000/2001 fiscal year;
- Park revenues were up 15 per cent over established target levels under Parks and Special Places Incentive Based Budget (IBB) Program. IBB was implemented to encourage a more entrepreneurial, business-like style of park management;
- A Provincial Park Land Natural and Cultural Resources Conservation Action Plan was drafted;
- 1999-2000 was year one of a three-year plan to install a computerized campground registration and client uses analysis system;
- Work continued to develop a framework establishing future services and facilities for each of the parks;

In 1999-2000:
- approximately 2.48 million visitor days were spent in provincial parks. (The 5.6 per cantage decrease in attendance is due to poor summer weather.);
- Saskatchewan Express entertained in 11 provincial parks thanks to sponsorship by Saskatchewan Wheat Pool; and
- more than 150 publications (e.g. campground layout, interpretive brochures, canoe route booklets, teacher's education packages, winter trail brochures) were provided to help park visitors enjoy their holidays.

- A 2001-02 capital/infrastructure program was completed;
- A long-term client research strategy was implemented, supported by information gathered through SERM's specialized Campground Z software;
- A CDI was prepared on developing a sponsorship/partnership strategy for park lands; and
- Public consultations on Parks Tomorrow follow-up strategies were completed.

A discussion paper on policy directions regarding hunting, angling and associated activities in provincial parks was presented to the Saskatchewan Outfitters Association, Provincial Park Advisory Committees and FSIN for review and comments. Specific policy statements are under development.

Saskatchewan Housing Corporation and SERM completed a global policy for all government housing that came into effect January 1, 2000. The new policy brings rent fees in line with current market rates and provides additional funding for maintenance and upgrading of housing facilities. The first of five annual rental increases was implemented April 1, 2000.

SERM and SaskWater completed two major capital developments at Pike Lake Provincial Park: a new administration/maintenance building and a new spur dyke and pumping facility. Construction began on a new visitor/administration facility at Greenwater Lake Provincial Park.

Components of a Provincial Park Market Segmentation and Opportunity Identification Marketing Strategy were drafted with a final report scheduled for completion by the summer of 2000. Park management strategies were updated for Pike Lake and The Battlefords Provincial Parks, a new strategy for Greenwater Lake Provincial Park neared completion, strategies for Danielson and Buffalo Pound Provincial Parks were under development. Cypress Hills Provincial Park implemented a Park Business/Marketing Plan featuring a FM broadcasting facility operated in conjunction with the Town of Maple Creek and the Southwest Tourism Region.

In addition to continued investment to improvement existing park facilities, SERM facilitates privately operated businesses and new commercial developments in parks. Six facilities (representing approximately $1,170,000 in capital investment) were completed and opened in 1999-2000: a maintenance building at Blackstrap Provincial Park's ski hill, fairway development and irrigation at Duck Mountain Provincial Park's golf course, rental cabin developments in Meadow Lake Provincial Park, campground development at Sturgeon River Recreation Site and improvements to the golf course in Greenwater Lake Provincial Park;

I. Enforcement and Compliance

SERM, Saskatchewan Highways and Transportation and Saskatchewan Finance determined the feasibility of a common Enforcement Communications Centre for law enforcement staff. SERM's Enforcement Centre now provides dispatch services for conservation officers, Highway Traffic officers, National Park Wardens and Environment Canada.

An action plan was developed in conjunction with other provincial and federal enforcement and protective services to address public safety and security threats associated with Y2K.

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Goal 4 Organizational Development

Build a strong, well-informed, confident workforce and provide a safe and positive working environment for all employees.

Objectives

A. Organizational Development Initiatives

1. Implement SERM's Organizational Development Framework; launch the first year of the Organizational Development Action Plan, including learning and development activities for staff;
2. Enhance SERM's "safety first" approach;
3. Promote employment equity (EE). Key long-term initiatives include:
   - implement SERM's Aboriginal Employment Strategy and the Cultural Awareness Strategy; and
   - work towards the long term objective of a SERM workforce representative of the diversity found in Saskatchewan's workforce.
4. Implement SERM's Mentoring Pilot Program.

B. Performance Development/Training

1. Work with Northern Affairs, Northlands College and SIAST to establish a Saskatchewan Fire Technology Training School.

C. Human Resource Management

1. Review and upgrade Emergency Fire Fighter wage structure to meet national standards;
2. Accommodate the transfer of human resource responsibilities from the Public Service Commission (PSC) to the department;
3. Develop a *Strategic Human Resource Management Plan* consistent with the government-wide Human Resource Management Transformation;
4. Work with the PSC to continue implementation of the new classification plan;
5. Transfer responsibility for classification of labour service and non-permanent positions to Service Bureaus; and
6. Foster positive working relations between management and unionized staff by supporting the work of Union Management Committees.

Activities and Accomplishments

A. Organizational Development Initiatives

Organizational Development is a planned ongoing change process to enhance the effectiveness and health of employees and the organization. SERM's Organizational Development Working Group (ODWG) recommends how the department can develop and co-ordinate activities to improve SERM's effectiveness. The ODWG focused on leadership, work planning, skill competencies and enhanced staff training. A resource binder, *Moving Forward - Skills and Knowledge for SERM's Evolving Workplace*, was developed. Managerial and professional-level staff used a Hay McBer Management Competencies Assessment to develop a personal development profile and identify common group development needs.

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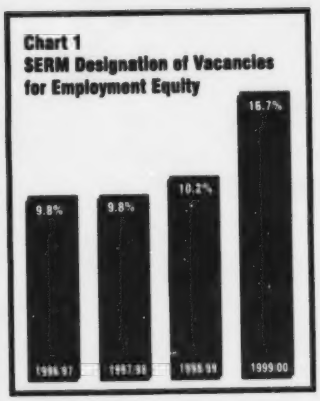
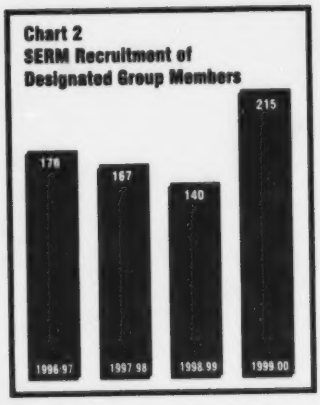
The Organizational Development Action Plan detailed learning and development activities for staff based on needs identified through a two phase employee survey. In 1999-2000, workshops were offered on "Resolving Conflict Constructively" and "Fundamentals of Work Planning". Approximately 300 staff took part in Franklin Covey's "The Roles of a Leader - Leadership Development for SERM Employees" workshops.

The Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) Strategic Plan was approved by Executive Management on February 28, 2000. The plan focused on:

- establishing and implementing a health and wellness program;
- new aviation directives and training standards for staff using air transportation;
- developing and delivering a "Hearing Conservation Program". Certified Audiometric Technicians are scheduled to conduct hearing tests in 2000-01;
- completing a draft policy establishing a "Critical Incident/Traumatic Event Program"; and
- line managers and local OH&S committee members continued ongoing training in health and safety-related issues.





SERM's Employment Equity 1999-2000 Annual Report detailed significant progress in fostering a higher level of understanding and support for workplace diversity and employment equity. SERM was the only government department with a full time Workplace Diversity Consultant. With one exception, all of SERM's short term hiring goals were met. They were:

Women in Management	5
Women in Non-traditional	44
Persons of Aboriginal Ancestry	33
Persons with Disabilities	12
Members of Visible Minorities	8
TOTAL	102

Substantive progress was realized in most long term hiring goals. The number of vacancies designated for employment equity hiring (see Chart 1) increased as did the number of individuals hired from the equity groups (see Chart 2) over previous years. Recruitment efforts improved, designation percentage increased from 10.2 (in 1998-1999) to 16.7 (in 1999-2000) and actual recruitment increased from 140 (1998-1999) to 215 in (1999-2000).

The 1999-2000 Employment Equity Committee's (EEC) Action Plan focused on awareness, education and communication. Other activities included recruitment, career development, retention, data collection and budget proposals. Feedback received from staff and external agencies and stakeholders was generally positive and supportive of SERM's workplace diversity initiatives.

A Workplace Diversity Strategy was approved in February 2000, with implementation scheduled for 2000-01. Along with the EEC Action Plan, the strategy will be the department's employment equity and diversity blueprint over upcoming years. The strategy outlines methods to improve SERM's ability to recruit and retain people from all of society, with an emphasis on those who offer the advantage of greater diversity.

SERM implemented a Mentoring Pilot Program as part of a process to promote staff potential and abilities in an inclusive environment. Twelve protégées were given a unique opportunity to learn about SERM's culture and organization through an association with their mentors.

Per SERM's Aboriginal Employment Strategy, 1999-2000 was a year of continued outreach with Aboriginal institutions and groups. SERM also worked with Intergovernmental Affairs to deliver Aboriginal Cultural Awareness training to COs and other SERM staff.

B. Performance Development/Training

SERM worked with Northern Affairs, Northlands College and SIAST to establish a Saskatchewan Fire Technology Training School. Associated activities included:

- partnering with SIAST to determine training needs through a market survey of industry, Aboriginal groups and educators;
- used a consulting company to determine vocational needs for technical and professional training; and
- solicit funding.

C. Human Resource Management

SERM had 852 permanent full-time, 9 temporary, 101 permanent part-time, 123 Term/casual and 1,020 Labour Service staff employees in 1999-2000. The department maintains offices in 52 communities throughout the province.

Saskatchewan's Emergency Fire Fighter wage structure was reviewed and upgraded to meet national standards.

An outline of a *Strategic Human Resource Management Plan* was developed as part of the government's Accountability Project and SERM's Strategic Planning process.

SERM worked with the PSC to resolve the large number of outstanding classification actions and appeals. A corporate management plan (including a consistency review) was implemented. There were no developments on the objective to transfer human resource responsibilities from the Public Service Commission to SERM in 1999-2000.

A Service Bureau Management Team received training in the new classification plan and each Service Bureau took on responsibility for labour service and term position classifications. A review team was struck to handle more complex classifications and to ensure consistency throughout the department.

SERM works to foster positive working relations between management and in-scope staff through active local and provincial Union Management Committees (UMCs). UMCs act as a liaison between employees and the department to identify and address local, provincial and service-wide issues related to department operations, programs and initiatives.

Business Management and Program Support

Improve decision-making by refining information and financial management processes, in-reach and out-reach programs, communications and public participation/partnerships.

Objectives

A. Strategic Planning

1. Continue developing the strategic vision piece for the department;
2. A Corporate Planning Design Team will review and make recommendations to strengthen and enhance existing departmental planning processes with links to budget planning and development consistent with recommendations of the government-wide Improving Performance Management and Accountability project; and
3. Update Saskatchewan's Environmental Agenda to reflect SERM's ecosystem management and current government priorities.

SERM's Inquiry Centre provides one-window access for people contacting the department. The Inquiry Centre fielded almost 20,000 phone calls during 1999-2000, an increase of more than 7,500 from 1998-99.

B. In-reach/Out-reach

1. Complete SERM's annual Corporate Communications Strategy;
2. Develop a pilot for EcoRegion/branch-based communications strategy;
3. Support a strategic approach to internal communications;
4. Examine and develop a framework for existing educational activities; and
5. Develop communication strategies for all key department initiatives and issue-management purposes.

C. Information and Financial Management

1. Prepare and implement a Strategic Information Management Plan for the department;
2. Continue work on projects identified by the Information Management Team;
3. Provide support and assistance to automated land records project , upgrade SERM's internal land disposition inventory system;
4. Complete implementation, monitoring and ongoing evaluation of the Financial Management System (FMS) with particular emphasis on improving accountability processes and management information reporting;
5. Replace obsolete systems (e.g., LIPS, LDIS, CRIS); and
6. Enhance fiscal accountability and management through ongoing mid-year expenditure management and forecasting processes.

D. Continuous Improvement

1. Provide a more focused leadership role in managing the department's legislative and regulatory agenda and presentation to all Cabinet and Caucus Committees:
   - develop a support network throughout the department;
   - design and conduct workshops; and
   - reform regulations.
2. Work with Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation (SPMC) to complete a space audit of all SERM accommodations and begin work on long term Accommodation Strategy.

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Activities and Accomplishments

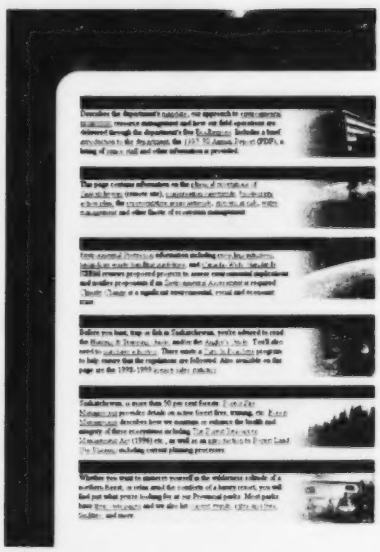
A. Strategic Planning

Departmental planning processes have been revised based on the new government-wide Accountability Framework. SERM was one of seven departments to participate in the new planning process. SERM's Strategic Plan received Cabinet Committee review and approval in principle in December 1999. Additional work on a spring 2000 version of the Plan was based on guidance and direction from Cabinet Committees. New goals and objectives were developed and are currently being used in the department. Other elements of the plan include: environmental scanning, performance measures, risk assessment and a four-year financial plan. When approved, SERM's *Strategic Plan 2001-02 to 2004-05* will succeed the department's 1997 Five Year Plan.

A planned update of Saskatchewan's Environmental Agenda was deferred until revised goals and objectives (per SERM's new strategic plan) can be incorporated. An *Agenda for the 1st Term of the New Millennium* was drafted.

B. In-reach/Out-reach

A two-year strategy to improve communications within and by the department was completed in October, 1999. Communication Services Branch initiated a process to improve overall positioning of the department, including the development of positioning statements, program areas to emphasize, a common look to department products and improved distribution of communications products. SERM increased the resources it applies to market research, launching a survey of public attitudes toward environmental management in February 2000. When complete, the information will help the department measure the effectiveness of its communications and provide information on public needs and priorities. Communication Services Branch completed an annual communications plan outlining the department's goals and objectives, workplan, and staffing expenditures for 2000-01.



SERM's web site **(http://www.serm.gov.sk.ca.)** was redesigned and work began to promote and increase site "hits". In 1999-2000, the number of visitors to SERM's website doubled from less than 3,000 to 6,000 per month. Clients are now able to use the Internet to purchase hunting and fishing licences or use an online order form to obtain a range of publications and reports on the province's environment.

SERM increased resources to support a strategic approach to internal communications, including partnering with Information Management Branch to redesign the department's intranet (i.e., internal web site) to improve the availability and speed of information flow within the department. The department's employee newsletter, *Down to Earth,* went on-line to take advantage of opportunities offered by an electronic design and distribution medium. Linkages were strengthened with department committees, including ODWG and Corporate Plan Design Team.

A review of the department's education activities is expected to be completed in 2000-01. A pilot to develop an EcoRegion communications strategy was re-scheduled for the next fiscal year.

Communication Services implemented major communications campaigns designed to: facilitate sustainable development of the province's forest, increase visitation to provincial parks, reduce human-caused forest fires, and improve water stewardship. Over 400,000 publications were distributed to individuals and organizations as part of department strategy to encourage environmental stewardship, improve participation in SERM programs, and inform stakeholders of changes and developments. The department issued 50 news releases and completed communication strategies for wide range of issues.

SERM prepared seven Cabinet Decision Items (CDIs) that received Cabinet approval in 1999-2000. An additional five CDIs were drafted (e.g., Environmental Legislation Review and Approval, Biodiversity, Workplace Violence, Public Involvement Process for Fort A La Corne Forest LUP) and five Information Items were forwarded to Cabinet.

C. Information & Financial Management

A Strategic Information Management Plan was finalized and endorsed by SERM's Information Management Steering Committee. The plan ensures a prioritized, strategic approach is taken to system development in the department. Initial activity was a (department-wide) gap analysis to establish future priorities for system development.

Development and implementation of high priority projects identified by SERM's Information Management Team continued, including:

- automate processes and streamline operations in the fire program. System development to enable payment of emergency forest fire fighters on-site in remote locations was completed. Preliminary work on a fixed assets and inventory system began;
- SERM's Y2K preparedness plan ensured a smooth transition to the new millennium. Systems replacements/upgrades included:
  - replacing desktop computers and file severs;
  - upgrading the network, desktop and remote access operating systems;
  - replaced the (non Y2K compliant) cash register information system managing campground visitation, park entry, recreation program use and revenue collection for all provincial parks and recreation sites; additional upgrades are scheduled for 2000-01;
  - an "ecosystem information to desktop" project provided staff with the basic infrastructure they need to compile, manage and distribute information to plan and deliver programs; and
  - progress was made on an Aviation Management tracking system.

The province embarked on a multi-year LAND project to automate land records. SERM staff contributed to the project by completing surveys and interviews and providing data. This work also furthered SERM's objective to improve internal disposition inventory systems and Land Records administration.

In April 1999 SERM's new Financial Management System (FMS) came into use for processing and tracking purchases, payments, revenues and receivables - providing the department better fiscal management of our programs. The initial focus was to provide support to users as they learned the new system. The system was enhanced (e.g., integrated payroll information) and further training provided

staff a measure of confidence in the system's accuracy, reliability and timeliness. Further enhancements, such as implementing budgeting and forecasting functionality, will continue in 2000-01.

Legacy systems (e.g., LIPS, LDIS) were upgraded to meet Y2K requirements. Further replacement is scheduled as part of an ongoing multi-year gap analysis. Many provincial parks began using SERM's new Campground Ž software (a computerized campground registration and reservation system), others are expected to be using it prior to June, 2000. Additional revenue operations are scheduled for point-of-sale software installations over the next two years.

Service Bureaus continued to consult with clients on budget forecasts to provide timely information for an overview of corporate finances and training for department managers was planned.

D. Continuous Improvement

The goal of the regulatory review process is to have fewer, more focused regulations. In addition to reducing the number of regulations by 25 per cent, SERM established a goal to shift 10 per cent of the department's regulations from a "command and control" style to a persuasive style that uses and creates markets by setting standards. In 1999-2000: four new regulations were developed; four regulations were amended; five were repealed; and 11 were designated for Omnibus Repeal.

SERM worked with SPMC to complete the space audit of all SERM accommodations. A four year plan was developed to address known accommodation needs and associated cost estimates.

Next year's 2000-01 Annual Report will be the first to detail the department's activities and accomplishments according to the revised goals, objectives and principles developed as part of the government's new Accountability Framework. The five Strategic Goals upon which this 1999-2000 Annual Report is based will be replaced with three core goals and 10 objectives based on desired outcomes. It will incorporate performance measures to make it easier for our stakeholders and the public to monitor our success in achieving these goals.

The public considers personal health as the principal benefit of environmental protection. The public looks to SERM to balance environmental, social and economic values fairly and efficiently. These expectations have been summarized and are offered as a preview of things to come.

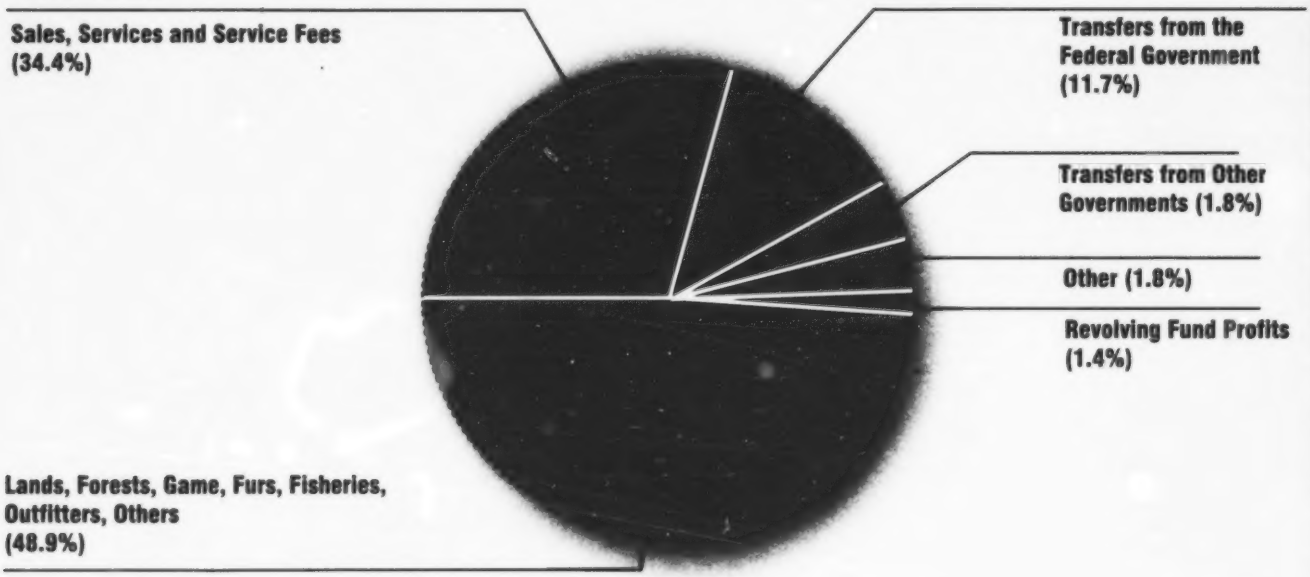
Core Goal	Objectives
A Clean and Healthy Environment	• Clean water • Clean air • Clean land • Minimize risks and adverse impact of wildland fires on people, property and resources
Ecosystem Health and Natural Abundance of Renewable Resources	• Species and habitat at risk are protected • Biodiversity and ecosystems are sustained
Fair Opportunity for Sustainable Use and Enjoyment of Natural Renewable Resources	• Equitable allocation of natural renewable resources • Accessible recreation and educational opportunities on provincial park and Crown resource lands • Increased economic benefits based on sustainable use of natural renewable resources • First Nations and Métis rights and their interests in the use of natural resources are met through cooperative means

The 2000-01 Annual Report will be organized to provide information on how SERM activities contribute to these goals and objectives. Where available, additional details will be provided on performance measures, baseline values and targets to provide meaningful information to our clients.

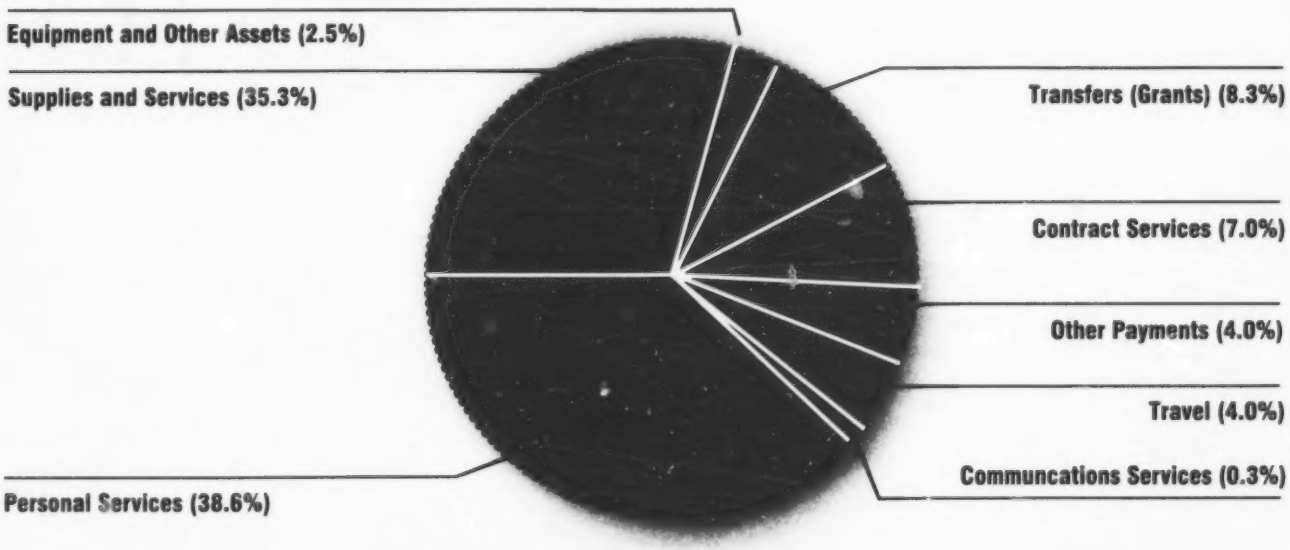
The department's 2000-01 Annual Corporate Plan provides more detail on activities under each of the corporate goals and objectives. Copies are available upon request from SERM's Inquiry Centre (1-800-567-4224).

The following represents an overview of financial activities within the department. In 1999-2000, SERM spent $147,392,000 and collected $43,450,000 on activities related to its mandate.

Revenue


Sales, Services and Service Fees (34.4%)
Transfers from the Federal Government (11.7%)
Transfers from Other Governments (1.8%)
Other (1.8%)
Revolving Fund Profits (1.4%)
Lands, Forests, Game, Furs, Fisheries, Outfitters, Others (48.9%)

Expenditures



Revenues 1999-2000

Period Ending March 31, 2000 (in $000's)

Transfer from the Federal Government	5,092
Other Revenues:	
Interest, premium, discount exchange	27
Lands, Forest, Game, Furs, Fisheries, Outfitters, other	21,248
Conditional Revenue	0
Revolving Fund Profits	587
Sales, Services and Service Fees	14,910
Transfers from Other Governments	802
Other	784
Total	**$43,450**

Expenditures 1999-2000

Period Ending March 31, 2000 (in $000s)

	Personal Services	Travel	Transfers (Grants)	Contract Services	Comm. Services	Supplies & Services	Equipment & Other Assets	Other Payments	Total Expend. (Actual)	Revised Estimate	Over (Under) Expend
Administration	5,642	219	2	229	389	668	422	(4)	7,567	6,972	595
Accommodation and Central Services		61				4,842			4,903	5,099	(196)
Environmental Assessment	588	39	23	44		35	18		747	741	6
Parks and Special Places	2,089	180	138	1,803	12	777	42		5,041	5,282	(241)
Fish and Wildlife	2,031	328	563	348	4	1,068	154		4,496	3,925	571
Fish and Wildlife Development Fund			2,856						2,856	2,500	356
Operations	17,046	2,388	10	1,040	30	2,672	1,294	5,790	30,270	27,698	2,572
Forest Ecosystems	3,030	345	32	3,420	30	422	154	35	7,468	6,853	615
Fire Management and Forest Protection	22,201	1,999	14	3,068	3	41,216	1,419		69,920	28,205	41,715
Environmental Protection	2,034	107	8,613	46	7	145	61		11,013	10,865	148
Policy and Public Involvement	1,278	67	20	295	1	63	45		1,769	1,795	(26)
Sustainable Land Management	961	112		26	10	105	108	20	1,342	1,415	(73)
Totals	$56,900	$5,845	$12,271	$10,319	$486	$52,013	$3,717	$5,841	$147,392	$101,350	$46,042

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Resource Protection and Development Revolving Fund

provides resource protection and development services.

Unaudited Statement of Operations and Accumulated Operating Deficit — Year Ended March 31, 2000

		1999-00 Budget	1999-00 Actual	1998-99 Actual
Revenues:				
	Spruce budworm	2,050,000	1,887,928	2,289,836
	Radio communications	1,410,000	1,458,914	1,864,198
	Equipment rental and recoveries	217,467	236,049	241,734
	Staff Housing	106,710	111,432	116,527
	Northern Air Operations	60,000	46,022	122,989
	Grants from Government of Canada	0	0	5,401
	Other	0	30,303	16,687
Total Revenues		$3,844,177	$3,770,648	$4,657,372
Expenses:				
	Salaries	906,512	964,566	993,494
	Contractual services	2,302,310	2,175,492	2,588,551
	Labour, travel and sustenance	51,000	72,641	66,373
	Amortization	338,955	309,146	348,338
	Materials and supplies	168,000	274,402	256,541
	General and administrative	77,400	666	150
Total Expenditure		$3,844,177	$3,796,913	$4,253,447
Gain (Loss) from Operations		0	(26,265)	403,925
	Subsidy from General Revenue Fund	0	0	0
	Transfers/Recovery from Revolving Funds	0	(95,307)	0
Net Income (Loss)		0	(121,572)	403,925
Accumulated Surplus (Deficit) - beginning of year		295,307	295,307	(108,618)
Accumulated Surplus (Deficit)-end of year		$295,307	$173,735	$295,307

Fish and Wildlife Development Fund

was established to prevent the reduction of wildlife habitat and wildlife populations in Saskatchewan's agricultural areas and for fish enhancement projects intended to prevent the loss of fish or fish habitat. With the acquisition of an additional 3,244 hectares in 1999-00, the Fish and Wildlife Development Fund now manages over 74,685 hectares of habitat important to wildlife.

Unaudited Statement of Revenue, Expenditure and Restricted/Unrestricted Net Assets — Year Ended March 31, 2000

		1999-00 Budget	1999-00 Actual	1998-99 Actual
Revenue:				
	General Revenue Fund	2,500,000	2,895,266	2,756,570
	Interest	115,000	168,062	157,052
	Field Permits and leases	150,000	151,205	141,126
	Other revenue	15,000	26,647	38,252
Total Revenue		$2,780,000	$3,241,180	$3,093,000
Expenditure:				
	Habitat enhancement projects	1,014,500	1,028,006	956,384
	Fish enhancement projects	911,000	845,466	846,792
	Grants-in-lieu of Taxes	180,000	202,041	180,828
Total Expenditure		$2,105,500	$2,075,513	$1,984,004
Net income (Loss)		$674,500	$1,165,667	$1,108,996
Restricted and Unrestricted Net Assets- beginning of year		$3,471,613	$3,471,613	$3,104,389
Restricted and Unrestricted Net Assets - end of year		$3,471,613	$3,714,497	$3,471,613

Commercial Revolving Fund

conducts commercial commercial activity required for the promotion, development and management of provincial parks.

Unaudited Statement of Operations and Accumulated Operating Deficit — Year Ended March 31, 2000

		1999-00 Budget	1999-00 Actual	1998-99 Actual
Revenues:				
	Campground	2,886,000	3,427,837	3,340,502
	Cottage lots/permits	1,523,000	1,511,711	1,550,931
	Park entry	1,305,000	1,420,021	1,469,274
	Surface leases	387,000	543,388	393,501
	Commercial leases	518,000	445,466	571,727
	Accommodation	207,000	276,651	288,772
	Other revenue	253,000	355,856	425,945
	Hay & Grazing fees	174,000	147,738	157,778
	Swimming pool fees	155,000	140,373	161,937
Total Revenues		$7,408,000	$8,269,041	$8,360,367
Expenses:				
	Wages	7,464,000	8,651,721	7,398,357
	Material, supplies & freight	877,000	1,432,577	936,282
	Repairs & maintenance	738,000	645,328	756,952
	Utilities	709,000	640,406	753,325
	Vehicle rentals	625,000	664,170	672,185
	Amortization	250,000	221,376	231,630
	Other expenses	285,000	393,164	283,727
	Communications	265,000	267,802	279,953
	Equipment rentals	197,000	193,522	196,960
	Publicity & advertising	160,000	184,277	184,787
	Travel & sustenance	146,000	203,112	155,712
Total Expenditure		$11,716,000	$13,497,455	$11,849,870
Gain (loss) from Operations		($4,308,000)	(5,228,414)	(3,489,503)
	Subsidy from General Revenue Fund	4,588,000	4,847,000	4,276,000
Net Income/(loss)		280,000	(381,414)	786,497
Accumulated Surplus (deficit) - beginning of year		841,833	841,833	55,336
	Transfers/Recovery from Revolving Fund	0	(492,000)	0
Accumulated Surplus (deficit)-end of year		$1,121,833	($31,581)	$841,833

Economic, Health and Social Benefits

Health

- clean water to drink
- clean air to breathe
- clean and healthy land to support us
- maintaining biological diversity secures the genetic source material that can be used for new crop varieties, pharmaceuticals, medicines and other products and possibilities yet unknown
- the beauty of Saskatchewan's natural environment contributes to our physical and mental well-being

Economic

- SERM's ecosystem-based management is at the leading edge of conservation approaches. It helps to create a natural competitive advantage for industries dependent on natural resources (e.g. agriculture, tourism, forestry, etc.) through programs that maintain a quality of environment that is among the best in the world
- growing five per cent annually (more than twice the rate of the provincial economy), environmental management generates sales of $200 million a year and provides employment to some 2,500 people in consulting, management services and recycling-related services
- Saskatchewan's renewable resources - forestry, wildlife and fisheries, etc. - contribute $1.2 billion and more than 17,000 jobs to our economy
- Primary and secondary forest industry provide more than 13,000 jobs in Saskatchewan and generates $520 million in annual sales of forest products. In 1999-2000, 1,385 field or timber permits were issued and government and industry planted 17.6 million seedlings on 12,000 hectares
- A majority of non-resident anglers and all non-resident big game hunters use the services of Saskatchewan's 594 outfitters. In one year, the outfitting industry generates $80 million in direct revenues and an additional $20 million in related expenditures, primarily in rural and small communities. They provide approximately 1,000 person years of direct employment while attracting more than 20,000 out-of-province visitors

Social

- our unique landscape helps define use
- eighty-five per cent of Saskatchewan residents over the age of 15 (the third highest rate in Canada) participate in nature-related recreational activities such as hiking, camping, photography, fishing and hunting.
- sustainability is a core value of Saskatchewan people - from Aboriginal people's spiritual, economic and aesthetic connection to the land, our farmers' and ranchers' dependence on nature, and the thousands who make their living in forestry, tourism and environmental management - it's in our nature.